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The flower of the Manita Tree.

J. D. C. Sowerby fecit.

London, Published by Carpenter & Son, Old Bond Street, March 20th 1828.

MEXICAN ILLUSTRATIONS,

FOUNDED UPON FACTS;

INDICATIVE OF

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF

SOCIETY, MANNERS, RELIGION, AND MORALS,

AMONG THE

SPANISH AND NATIVE INHABITANTS

OF

MEXICO:

83815

WITH OBSERVATIONS UPON THE GOVERNMENT AND RESOURCES

OF THE

Republic of Mexico,

AS THEY APPEARED

DURING PART OF THE YEARS 1825, 1826, AND 1827.

INTERSPERSED WITH

OCCASIONAL REMARKS

UPON THE

CLIMATE, PRODUCE, AND ANTIQUITIES OF THE COUNTRY,
MODE OF WORKING THE MINES, &c.

W-6-22

BY MARK BEAUFOY,

LATE OF THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS.

LONDON:

CARPENTER AND SON, OLD BOND STREET.

1828.

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TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE,

AND

THE OFFICERS

OF

THE COLDSTREAM REGIMENT OF GUARDS;

THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED,

BY

ONE WHO WELL KNOWS AND WARMLY ADMIRES

THE CORPS.

HE DEDICATES IT TO THEM,

BECAUSE HE BELIEVES THE PROFESSION OF KILLING WITHOUT MURDER
TO BE THE MOST SATISFACTORY,
THE MOST HONOURABLE, AND THE LEAST MERCENARY MODE
OF ATTAINING RANK AND FORTUNE.

PREFACE.

" Sed quid opus teneras mordaci radere vero
Auriculas ?" PERS. Sat. i.

GAY, while occupied in the praiseworthy attempt to facilitate the inculcation of moral truths into the minds of the rising generation, by rendering English nursery fables into verse, has exhibited in his " Painter who pleased Nobody and Everybody," the consequences of invading that safe old adage —" The truth must not be spoken at all times." He says:

" So very like a painter drew,
That every eye the picture knew;
He hit complexion, feature, air,
So just, the life itself was there.
No flattery, with his colours laid,
To bloom restored the faded maid;
He gave each muscle all its strength;
The mouth, the chin, the nose's length
His honest pencil touched with truth,
And marked the date of age and youth.
He lost his friends, his practice failed—
Truth should not always be revealed."

There can be no question, that upon general principles the poet is right. But an exception may be conceded to such as having visited foreign countries *profess* to describe what they saw.

I am aware that many of the anecdotes referred to, will be recognized immediately by those who have had equal opportunities of judging with myself in those places in which the scenes are laid.

Fixed in my determination to state the truth, and nothing but the truth, I am nevertheless anxious to avoid wounding the feelings of any individual; and with this view, no name is given where the anecdote might prove injurious to character or delicacy. That many of the anecdotes related are indelicate, I am unwillingly obliged to admit; but when a man attempts to delineate a *beast*, he must be careful not to substitute "Hyperion for a Satyr."

By thus preserving secrecy as to names, the European reader is presented with a faithful representation of Mexican manners;

while the anecdotes, though capable of being fully authenticated by many as well as by myself, pay the respect due to personal feelings; and, by not identifying, cannot affect the originals beyond their immediate circle in the city of Mexico.

In Mexican society, the facts narrated are of such general notoriety, so much a matter of course, and of such ordinary every-day occurrence, that the printing of the scandal in England, or even its dissemination all over Europe, though with the names affixed, would not in the slightest degree lower the parties alluded to in their own estimation; nor detract in the least from their worth, their weight, or their respectability, in the eyes of their friends and fellow-citizens.

This is an opinion deduced from attentive observation during my stay in the country; but I should not feel justified in recording names, as connected with conduct and circumstances which, I am convinced, a few years of uninterrupted intercourse with European nations, and the consequent influx of education and intellectual improvement,

will exhibit in the same deformity to the *then* enlightened Mexican as to the *present* European observer.

I must entreat indulgence for the little egotistical word *I;* because, as two individuals very rarely see the same object through the same medium, I cannot use the authoritative plural unit *we;* and as I was not born a republican, I dare not copy Cæsar, and say *he:* I undertake to relate what I saw, what I felt, and what I thought.

It is barely possible (speaking with the usual vanity of authors) that these pages may survive a little longer than is sometimes the lot of similar ephemeral publications. Now should this come to pass, and a stray copy find its way across the Atlantic and into the Mexican territory, the day may arrive, when in the hands of the enlightened Mexican, this little work will be adverted to for comparison's sake, as giving a faithful account of the country described at the time the author wrote; as exhibiting the contrast between Mexico, crushed and oppressed beneath the besotted rule of Spanish intole-

rance, and the same country left to the natural elasticity of intellect improved by education, under the protecting influence of a free government:—the day, I say, may come, when the delighted Mexican, while descanting with enthusiastic exultation upon the advancement of his country in the career of civilization and in the scale of nations, will exultingly cry in the spirit, though not exactly in the words of our native bard:

"At the time this narrative was written,

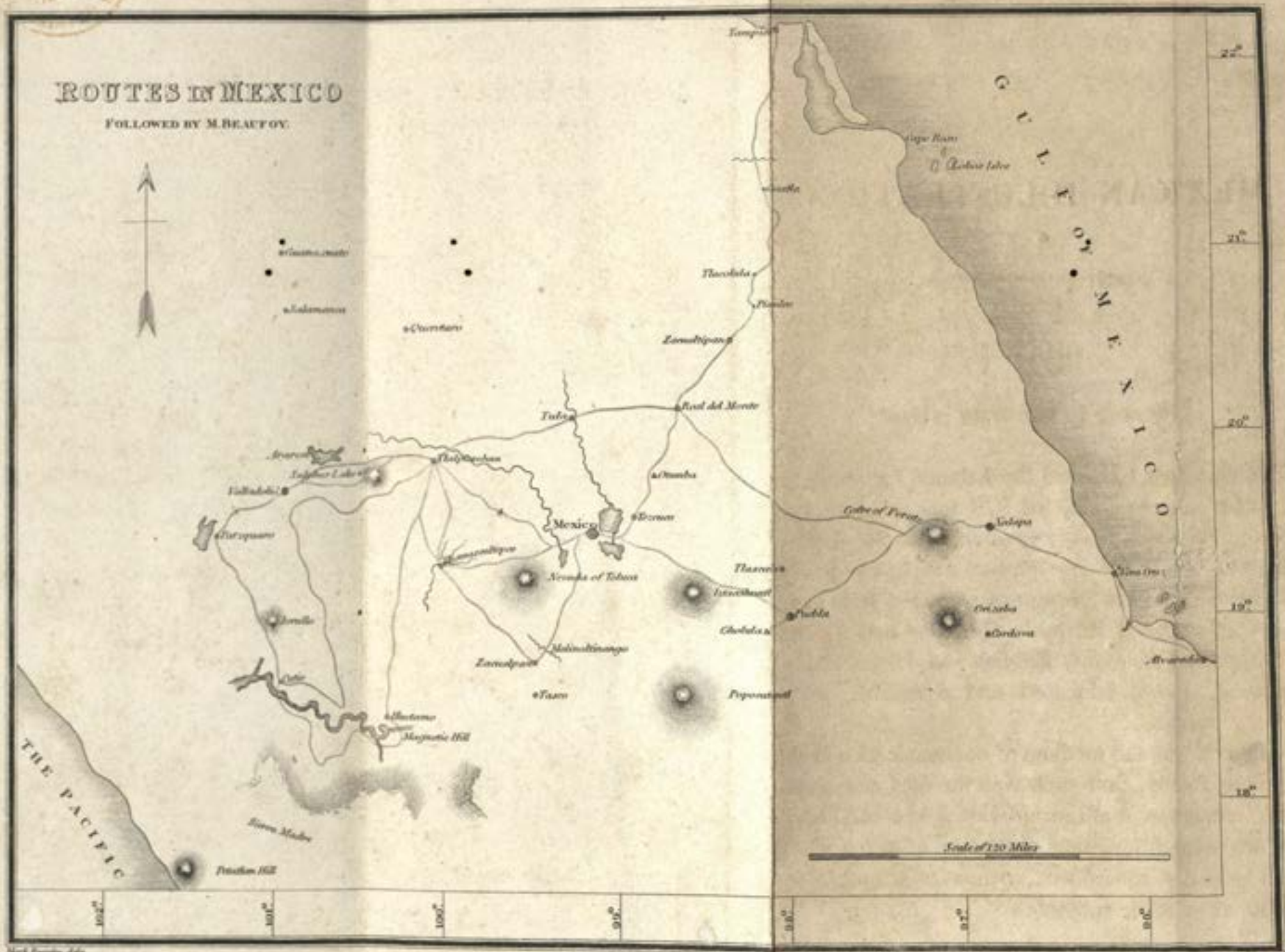
> 'This *was* the picture:
> Look you now what follows—
> Here *is* the picture.'"

At the commencement of this book, is a sketch of the routes I have myself followed in the Republic of Mexico, and reduced from a much larger map which I had the pleasure of giving away before I had the least intention of publishing my Notes on Mexico.

The bearings were all taken with a Schmalcalder's compass; and where I had the opportunity, are corrected to the true latitude and longitude. Only a few of the highest peaks and volcanoes, and those towns more particularly mentioned in the following pages,

have been there marked down; but in the other map I am not aware that I have omitted either a village or a ridge which I myself saw:

The tables of thermometrical and barometrical observations, are given as they were written down at the time. In regard to the latter, it will be seen that I generally make the elevations about 300 feet less than some other observers; which I presume is owing to some difference in the instruments used. What Mr. Burkart was kind enough to give me, is merely an abstract from the very curious and voluminous series of observations made by that gentleman.



London, Published by Carpenter & Son, Old Bond Street, March 10th 1824

MEXICAN ILLUSTRATIONS.

CHAP. I.

VOYAGE TO THE WEST INDIES.

THE first time I crossed the Atlantic was on board a stout merchant-ship of 370 tons, and in company with about twenty gentlemen in the employment of one of the new-formed mining companies. They were mostly foreigners, collected from every part of civilised Europe; Germans and French, Italians and Belgians, English and Irish; and, in general, a well-educated and agreeable set of young men.

French was the medium of communication in this moving Babel; and such was the *tact* and excellent management of the individual who had charge of the expedition, that a voyage of seven weeks was actually concluded, without one quarrel on political or other subjects.

This good humour, it must be confessed, was mainly attributable to the good eating continually going forward; for at a trifling expense, much attention had been paid to the national predilections of the party. Thus we had maccaroni for the Italians; sour krout for the Germans; and the Spanish servant acting as cook, who had been bred up a monk, was an adept in the monastic virtues of good living and savoury dishes.

The only complaint I remember, was that of an English carpenter; who roundly swore, that had he not fully expected to have hot rolls and soft bread each morning for his breakfast, nothing could have induced him to trust the "salt pond."

If our confusion of tongues made a Babel of the cabin, the "tout ensemble" on board converted the vessel into a true Noah's ark! Pigs and geese, turkeys and sheep, fowls and goats, dogs and vegetables, each class added its own peculiar smells to the general hogo; and the aromatic odour seemed to hang about the ship's sides in her progress, as if unwilling to deprive us of so gratifying a presence; while sharks and porpoises were attracted to the surface, on the same principle as half-starved urchins assemble round a cook's shop to snuff up the flavour of sage and onions and greasy sauces.

Dr. Johnson, I think, declares, that a ship is so much worse than a prison, because the culprit is in momentary danger of being drowned. Surely

he forgot, in addition, that sink of abomination called the steward's store.

It was at the foot of the stairs, close to my cabin door; and when the trap was lifted up to allow of admission, my nose was assailed with a concatenation of perfumes from cheese and tallow candles, sugar, rum, and innumerable etceteras. Water, that blessing which no one values till he has been without it, most frequently resembles on board ship, the washings of a gun-barrel; but if well impregnated with the filth of the Thames at London, it will, on being exposed to the air, fine itself down, and become both sweet and clear.

A voyage to the warmer latitudes is always the most agreeable to a landsman; for even if free from sea-sickness, he will find himself a prey to listless idleness, and a disinclination to do otherwise than loll about the deck, reading novels, playing chess, eating, yawning, betting, pitching dollars, and spitting into the dark blue face of the ocean. These soul-stirring recreations are however, very much impeded by the etiquette kept up in a vessel of war; for there it would be considered treason to bring your rear to an anchor on the boards of the deck, or to woo the breeze in a cotton jacket and loosened neckcloth.

The lofty island of Madeira, with its steep slopes smiling in rich cultivation and verdant shrubs, had a most lovely appearance as we sailed past its shores; and three days afterwards, the elevated

mountains of Palma, one of the Canary Isles, again broke the monotony of sea and air. It is remarkable at what immense distances from land small birds are sometimes met with; when they will flutter about the rigging till fatigue forces them to alight; and once perched, have rarely power to move off again, but stiffen and die on their resting-place.

The trade winds which blow across the Atlantic from the eastward, are frequently so steady as not to require a sail to be handled for a fortnight together; the vessel being wafted before the breeze a regular six knots the hour, but subject to a constant rolling see-saw motion. They are, not however, so invariably met with as is generally supposed; for on one of my voyages we had almost made Antigua before the wind became easterly, and it then never varied till we reached our port of destination.

Sailors have long had a sort of prescriptive right to demand contributions, or tar and feather those on board who have not previously passed the Line; and they now seem to have extended the privilege to the two Tropics. I was much amused with the ceremony of crossing the Cancer.

Jack was painted in a most barbarous and ill-omened fashion, his few articles of dress being decorated with ribbons and tinsel; the most hideous of his comrades was chosen to represent his queen, and had the additional adornment of petticoats; while several attendants of the most uninviting aspects,

waited on these mighty personages of the deep. The whole might have been taken for a group of devils, had they not been full of grins and kindness.

Our ship was hailed through an old cracked speaking trumpet with a noise of the damned; and soon after, Neptune with his suite were hauled on deck roughly enough. Armed with a brush dipped in tar and filth for his lather, and an old iron hoop for his razor, he blindfolded and led his victims one by one to the tub of ablution. I felt some secret misgivings when seated across this unsavoury throne, but escaped with huzzas on presenting a sovereign; they were more generous than wise, for I would rather have given ten than have been ducked in the cess-pool. The whole affair went off with mirth and good-humour; a plentiful distribution of salt water being the only damage.

Few are the circumstances which mark the passing time during a voyage. The circle bounded by the horizon is scarcely more than fifteen miles across; and the sight of a sail within so confined a space, is a rare occurrence while navigating the larger oceans. The loud breathing of a whale is sometimes heard of a calm evening, sounding like a deep and prolonged sigh across the waters. Those huge monsters of the deep do not spout out the water in the way I have seen depicted in some books, as if it were a lofty *jet d'eau*; but

blow it six or ten feet in the air like a thick steam or mist. They frequently lie sleeping on the surface, and have occasionally been run against by vessels; when the only injury I could hear of, was inflicted on the animal itself, as the foam under the bows became dyed with blood.

It was a new and interesting sight to me, when I found the sun so completely perpendicular above my head, that I in vain looked round for my shadow. The sinking of the Polar star very near to the horizon, and the view of the Cross, with other southern constellations, were also novelties to assist in driving away *ennui*; but the almost total loss of twilight, that period hallowed to the imagination and pensive regrets, for a long time caused a disagreeable impression on my mind.

I cannot prove that the moon gives more light between the tropics than in Britain, but her orb is so much brighter, as to pain the eye if long gazed at; and I scarcely remember to have witnessed a more magnificent sight than the full moon rising from the sea, then passing behind a very dense cloud, and in a great measure dispelling the darkness by the vivid rays she shot forth in every direction.

On approaching the coast of Barbadoes, numerous shoals of flying-fish darted from under the ship; raising themselves a few feet above the surface, for a distance of sixty or one hundred yards at a time. Their fins are formed of a substance resembling fine gauze, which while wet will sustain

them in the air; but becoming quickly dry, shrinks, loses the elasticity of wings, and they fall to the water.

This beautiful species varies in size from a small herring to a dragon-fly; and the velocity with which they dart above the waves, gives them the appearance of silver birds. Surely no creature is more miserably hunted than this. Constantly pursued by its enemy the dolphin, whose long forked tail gives it no chance of escape by swimming, it rushes into the air only to fall a prey to the hovering gulls and sea fowl. I have often thought, when looking at this chace, that those worthy men who declare all warfare to be unlawful, are not well versed in the ways of Providence; for it is a fact not to be denied, that the stronger feeds upon the weaker throughout every link of the creation; and I presume that convenient scape-goat the Devil cannot fairly be charged with the evil propensities of the irrational part of the animal world.

The inhabitants of Barbadoes justly consider the flying-fish as excellent food, and vast quantities are sold in the markets; the dolphin is rather dry, bad eating, and requires a rich sauce to make it palatable; but its changes of hue when first caught with a hook and dying, exhibit all the shades of blue, green, yellow, ultra-marine, and lead colour.

The nights at sea in these tropical climates, are much more oppressively hot than the day; for the

latter are in some degree cooled by breezes which usually rise with the sun and temper its rays; but during the former, notwithstanding my cabin windows were open, the thermometer rarely stood below 75 or 80 degrees. Meat hung up in the tops at night, and exposed to the moon-beams, is said to putrefy much sooner than during the day.

CHAP. II.

WEST INDIA ISLANDS.

Barbadoes is an island twenty miles long by fourteen wide, generally flat, destitute of wood, and richly cultivated; but I understood the northern part to be broken into some romantic hills, nicknamed the "Highlands of Scotland." It is, I believe, the only one in the West Indies not of volcanic origin; the soil being a decomposition of white coral, and very productive.

Bridgetown the capital, has a beautiful appearance when viewed from the bay; for the numerous cocoa and other trees intermingled with the houses, give the idea of coolness and shade, those most delightful of luxuries under a tropical sun. The streets are crooked and badly paved; but many of the houses are good, the inns are comfortable though expensive, and the whole place has an air of commercial bustle and industry which will no doubt be increased when the small pier now building is finished.

The country round the town for a considerable

distance is like a garden, the produce being chiefly sugar, ginger, cotton, some little coffee, and other tropical articles; the fruit is scarce and bad, but the markets are supplied abundantly from Surinam and other places on the Main.

The population is computed at 25,000 whites, 80,000 negroes, and 30,000 free people of colour. It is undoubtedly one of the most valuable of the British colonies; and the planters are ever ready to expend part of their wealth in hospitality to strangers.

GRENADA has a lofty volcanic ridge covered with impenetrable thickets, running through its centre; the shores are steep and bold, the water deep and clear as crystal even to the very rocks. The eastern side is the most productive, but little more than a narrow margin round the coasts is under cultivation. This island was finally seized by us from the French about fifty years ago, and few of that nation are now among its inhabitants. Sugar is the staple commodity; and many beautiful spots shaded by spreading trees, have been selected by the owners for their houses and negro huts.

Georgetown, which is at the south west extremity, possesses one of the securest harbours in the West Indies, and has never yet been visited by a hurricane. It is built on a steep slope, and has a most disagreeable appearance from the absence of shade; as well as from the roofs of the houses

being covered with red tiles, which the inhabitants declare repel the heat of the sun's rays much better than wooden shingles.

The harbour is protected by several forts on the heights above, garrisoned by two companies of infantry and a few artillerymen. The population of the island is said to be only 720 whites, 25,000 negroes, and 5000 free people of colour.

Only two of the rocky islets called the Grenadines are inhabited, but many of them rise abruptly from the sea in towering and picturesque masses.

St. Vincent is a very rugged island, rising in broken ridges, crag above crag, to the highest peak of the Sulphur Mountain, an elevation of 4000 feet. The slopes below are highly cultivated with sugar canes, cocoa-nut trees, and Indian corn; while the precipices and ravines of the interior are covered with woods. The sky was clear, the wind favourable, and the whole prospect when I visited those shores was truly fascinating.

Along the margin of a small bay at the south of the island is Kingstown; where the rocks are so bold and the water so deep, that vessels of the largest class can anchor close to the houses; immediately behind which, on a mountain steep, is the Botanical Garden of sixty acres. This spot is now suffered to be overgrown with weeds, because the British government has established another in Trinidad; but it contains among many

other rare plants, the bread-fruit trees brought by Captain Bligh from Otaheite.

This fruit is as large as a cocoa nut, with a very rough outside rind rather than shell. I was much disappointed with the taste both when baked or boiled, as it is like soft insipid dough; and am not at all surprised that its culture has been neglected in the West Indies, being far inferior to the banana in every respect.

It is a pity the botanical establishment in St. Vincent should be abandoned, as no island is more abundant in curious vegetable productions; and Mr. Gilding the rector is said to be a very eminent naturalist. The colony contains 1500 whites, 13,000 negroes of a much handsomer race than is usually met with, and 4000 free people of colour.

About 300 Red Caribs have survived their revolt and destruction, which took place forty years ago; and, now peaceably cultivate a fine large plain on the north side of the island. These, with some hundreds who inhabit the mountains of Trinidad, are the sole remnant of that powerful nation which gave name to the sea and islands of the Western Indies.

I did not see one of them, as they only come to Kingstown on market days: but I was assured that their foreheads really are much flatter, and slope more towards the back of the head, than is common with the other races of mankind. This

peculiarity however is much augmented by the custom of pressing their children's heads with boards; so different are the ideas of beauty among the various nations of the world.

The Red Caribs are described as very industrious, and very brave; instances having occurred during the insurrection stirred up by the French, of parties choosing rather to throw themselves from high precipices than surrender as prisoners.

The "Souffriere," or Volcano of St. Vincent, has a crater at its summit three miles in circumference and 600 feet deep; at the bottom of which is a bubbling lake of sulphur. It has never been known to emit lava; but in 1812 I think it was, that a vast eruption of ashes took place, which not only covered the neighbouring islands, but strange to say fell likewise in Barbadoes, seventy miles to windward.

This event in a part of the globe where the east wind always blows, would seem to prove that in the higher regions of the air a contrary current prevails; and that the volcano projected many of its ashes high enough to reach that current. The various directions of the wind at different elevations above the earth, have in fact been often witnessed in England on the ascent of balloons.

St. Lucie has two remarkable conical rocks of considerable altitude projecting from its south end.

Of the flourishing islands of Martinique and Guadaloupe, I could barely distinguish the mountainous outline; but I understood the French carried their colonial laws to an unexampled height of oppression both towards the creoles and negroes, so that an immense garrison was necessary to prevent another massacre of St. Domingo.

One day while scudding along under a clear blue sky, I observed a very small cloud rapidly approaching the vessel; when, to my utter astonishment, such a torrent of rain poured down for a few minutes, that the awning on deck, with the whole party dining under it, were wet through immediately. It passed like a meteor, and all was sunshine again.

Antigua has a very pleasing and tropical appearance, with its houses peeping from amid cocoa-trees, and the far more beautiful tamarind foliage. It is like a land of enchantment when seen after a tedious voyage; but the surf beats tremendously on its shores, and there is not a drop of water on the island except what is caught during the rainy season, and preserved in tanks.

Montserrat and Redondo are lofty isolated rocks; Nevis is an extinct volcano of considerable elevation, the base and sides of which are cultivated. Its town has a very pretty effect amid a grove of plantain trees, when seen at a distance; but on landing I found it a very wretched place, full of

laughing negroes, selling vegetables, fruits, &c., and who proved themselves very Jews at driving a bargain.

St. Kits is one of the most broken and interesting islands in the whole group, with its conical hills and towering mountains; and a sail along its shores is a real treat to the lovers of fine scenery. The peaks of St. Eustace and Saba isles, were seen in the distance; then the mountains of La Hotte, in Haiti, and at length the undulating shores of Jamaica, after having run a course of 5184 miles, according to the log-book.

When I first visited those seas, they were swarming with pirates; a set of the most remorseless savages of every nation; openly patronised by the Spaniards in Cuba, and secretly by the Dutch and Danes in their different settlements. They had a long impunity, as the British ships of war were of too large a class to follow them in shoal water, and generally too bad sailers to catch them in the open sea; at length, by the zealous exertions of both officers and seamen, with the hearty co-operation of the Americans, the larger portion were cut down, shot, or brought to Port Royal and hanged. The atrocities they were known to have committed, the tortures inflicted on their prisoners; the skeletons of men found bound to trees, the flesh eaten up by ants and other vermin, would fill a volume. I know of none worthy to

be compared with those miscreants, except perhaps our good allies; the high-minded, brave, and generous Greeks; whom I never yet heard accused of possessing one single virtue by those who knew them, since the days of my boyhood and classical falsities.

Such being the comfortable state of things among the West Indian islands in the spring of 1825, no sooner had we entered the Caribean Sea than the passengers mounted a nightly watch in addition to the crew; and one morning, just before day-break, we were all summoned on deck as a suspicious looking schooner was hovering about us.

Our vessel was well armed, and altogether we mustered forty-eight men; so that had we been taken, we should most certainly have deserved our fate. We were divided into three corps, and I had the command of fourteen men to defend the poop.

All were armed with muskets, besides swords and various other weapons, enough for double the number; but never shall I forget the scene which took place.

Most of the party strenuously objected to being formed two deep; because they were certain that those in the rear would by some blunder shoot their comrades in front. One kind-hearted man addressed me with, "My dear sir, I am most willing to do every thing I can for the general

safety; any thing else but to fire; for, odd as it may appear, I never yet pulled a trigger in my life, and know I can't do it."

Another turned out in his night-cap and dressing-gown; with a towel wrapped round his fat sides, in which were stuck two pair of pistols and a knife; while his shoulders were decorated with a couple of fowling-pieces.

Fortunate it was, I believe, for our reputations, that no attack was made. She was a low quick-sailing bark, and apparently full of men, as we could now and then perceive several fellows with red woollen caps peeping from behind the bulwarks; but having borne down upon us two or three times, and seeing the imposing force and attitude we displayed, she sheered off; not being aware that our backs were well propped up against the round house and other convenient supports.

On unloading the muskets, there was a roar of merriment at discovering that two-thirds of our volunteers had put in their cartridges with the balls downwards; but this circumstance, added to other very intelligible tokens of oozing valour, made some of us not a little happy a few days after, to be able to scare off another ill-looking schooner by firing a couple of round shot at her hull.

The southern shores of JAMAICA, diversified as they are with hill and dale, timber, and cultivation, and the Blue Mountains for a background, afford

a delightful *coup d'œil*; though usually considered far inferior to the north side of the island. But the prospect on rounding the point, and entering the harbour of Port Royal, was truly superb.

An extensive savanna of wood, rose gradually towards the cultivated base of ridges whose every fissure was distinctly marked in so clear an atmosphere, and which towered to the height of 7430 feet; while seven or eight men-of-war, numerous merchant vessels, forts, and a sweeping sheet of water, occupied the foreground.

Port Royal is about seven miles S. S. W. of Kingston, at the extremity of a long narrow sand-bank called the Palisades. It was once a large town; but being swallowed up by an earthquake about a hundred years ago, and again destroyed by a fire in 1815; it now consists only of a few houses attached to the well-arranged dock-yard and naval hospital.

The inhabitants were much alarmed in 1826 by a slight shock of an earthquake. The harbour is very secure, with a good bottom for anchorage; but some bad shoals have been formed outside by the tremendous seas which often roll in from the southward. Few places abound more with sharks, and one of extraordinary dimensions used to be constantly fed from the flag-ship, as it formed the most effectual security against desertion.

Kingston is a large town with straight and tolerably wide streets, but unpaved and dirty far

beyond what is usual in places belonging to the English; the sand is many inches deep, and every kind of filth and refuse is thrown upon it, where it remains for months if not eaten by the pigs, or washed off by the torrent of some thunder-storm. As the town lies on a slope, the people declare the rains would wash up any pavement; but I have seen within the tropics much steeper streets both paved and kept in order.

Many of the houses are extremely good and comfortable; but being surrounded with galleries and green Venetian blinds, which keep out the sun, admit the cool breezes, and prevent those within from being seen; they present a singular and even desolate aspect to newly-arrived Europeans. The custom of building them separate from each other, gives the idea of a much larger population being in the town than 40,000 persons.

Some of the streets are lined with ill-looking wooden piazzas, which would afford a highly agreeable shade from the sun, if each householder did not separate his own from his neighbour's by large stones or steps; the fatigue of getting over which obstructions, caused me to prefer walking in the middle of the road with an umbrella over my head. The roofs of houses are composed of small pieces of wood called shingles, which cover each other like slates.

The arsenal is close to the town wharf, and well supplied with stores and implements of war,

arranged in the neatest manner. The situation during the day, when the sea breeze is blowing, is delightfully cool; but at night, both damp and unhealthy.

The environs of Kingston differ very much according to the season, in their attractions for a visitor. When I first saw them, every thing was arid and burnt up by an unusual long drought of eight months; and that year proved particularly unhealthy, as the soldiers were dying fast, and the royal navy alone lost 1002 men. On my second visit, the rains had given a lively verdant appearance to the whole country; and the dusty sandy clearings, dotted with bushes and called parks, were covered with grass.

Many sugar plantations and country seats named penns, are scattered about the hilly eminences in situations uncommonly picturesque, and overshadowed by cocoa, tamarind, or the enormous cotton-trees; while the singularly gay light green of the young canes, the varying tints of odd shaped and novel species of shrubs, and the distant view of the ocean and shipping, leave nothing to be desired in the picture. Health alone is wanting to the white inhabitants.

The verandas to these houses form cool and agreeable apartments to sit in; the floors and wainscots of the rooms are sometimes polished like the oaken ones in old English mansions; and a large garden is generally attached to the pre-

mises, full of the most delicious tropical fruits. Mangoes are exquisite eating when first plucked from the tree; but very speedily gain a strong turpentine flavour, and become stringy.

By far the larger portion of the country is uncultivated mountain, or savanna coppices of cashew and other trees, where the cattle feed at liberty; and under the shade of which I observed many negro huts, by no means wretched. The island is 150 miles long by 40 broad.

The population of Jamaica is estimated at 40,000 whites and free people of colour, with 317,138 slaves. The head of cattle amount to 223,027; and the number of acres of land under cultivation is 2,250,585. Among the mountains are 1158 Maroons, the remnant of a nation almost exterminated forty years back, during a revolt. They are a fine race of men, descended from the Spanish slaves who fled to the interior when the English took possession of the island in the time of Cromwell; and being now in the pay of the government, never fail to bring back any runaway negroes.

The garrison of Jamaica is usually composed of two or three British regiments; and they have two large barracks in the vicinity of Kingston, one at Stoney Hill, the other on lower ground, called the Camp. To this latter, a canal has lately been cut from the mountains, which supplies plenty of water for all purposes of baths, as well as drinking: this

useful work cost only 1500*l.* according to report; and if carried on to the town, might be made to yield a revenue.

A circumstance which occurred during the autumn of 1826, afforded a most painful subject of conversation when I last visited Kingston. A British sloop of war, containing a lieutenant, two midshipmen, and thirty-two sailors, was capsized off the north coast of the Island of Cuba. The poor fellows hung about the wreck until the sharks collected and began to fight for their prey. The first bitten was the lieutenant, whose leg was taken off above the knee. He observed the horror of his crew, and regardless of pain, cheered them with—"Never mind, my brave boys, old England will furnish me with a good wooden substitute." He was soon torn to pieces; and others quickly shared the same fate.

A young midshipman was pushed up on a part of the wreck the sharks could not reach; one seaman swam off, and thinks he frightened the voracious animals by splashing the water; but most probably they remained where their victims were more numerous. He was picked up by an American vessel, which also put about and saved the midshipman. Thirty-three human beings were dragged off one by one and devoured.

CHAP. III.

SLAVERY—MANNERS AND STATE OF SOCIETY IN THE WEST INDIES.

In regard to slavery in the West Indies, I shall make a few remarks; not by any means with the intention of approving the principle; but solely to tell the truth as to the manner in which negroes are really treated in colonies to which they were originally brought, not only with the approbation, but in some measure by the order of the British Government.

When I mention they are the property of other men, I presume I have said enough to show that I consider them to be in a very unfortunate and degraded state; but as far as the mere animal appetites, eating, drinking, and the cares of this life are concerned, I do not hesitate to declare them better off, not only than the peasantry of most parts of continental Europe, but than many of the lower orders in the land of John Bull himself.

A revision of the Slave Laws was much wanted, and the atrocious trade in negroes was very properly suppressed; though the Spaniards, by the bye, *still* carry it on with circumstances of addi-

tional barbarity, in spite of our teeth. But so much has now been done to improve and ameliorate the condition of the blacks, that I much doubt whether further interference will add to their happiness; and am quite certain entire freedom should be granted very gradually, and with great caution, not only for the safety of the white owners, but of the slaves themselves.

Every master is now obliged by law to have all his negroes registered, and inspected once a month by a surgeon; he must allow each a hut and garden ground, with permission to work it, and sell the produce; he must feed and clothe all, both the aged, infirm, and sick, not having the power to turn them adrift under pretence of giving them liberty. There are too, I believe, some existing regulations against dividing families, by selling them separately; but I do not profess to know the whole code.

Government commissioners are appointed at different stations, to hear and redress all just complaints; having authority not only to imprison the master, but also to emancipate the slave in aggravated cases of ill usage. Neither is this a dead letter, but is sometimes acted upon.

Negroes, to the casual observer, seem all to have a strong resemblance to each other; but this is far from being the case either in features or mental qualities. The natives from Congo are said to be the most lively, active, and valuable;

many others are ugly, sulky, fat, and lazy. Much perhaps depends on the nature of their employment; for some keep shops, or act as pilots, fishermen, drivers, grooms, and artizans, who are only required to pay a weekly stipend to their owners; others are domestic servants, often favoured and pampered like the gentlemen of the shoulder-knot in England; the remainder work on the plantations, and probably enjoy the fewest comforts.

Many of them possess considerable shrewdness, and not a few have laughing cheerful faces which put their masters quite out of countenance. I have often been much amused with their conversation, when a passenger in their boats or gigs.

Once a good humoured negro suddenly held up his fist, and changing his tone, exclaimed with much gesticulation to one of his countrymen, "Oh, you dam nigger, I'll lick you, I'll catch your dam black face." "Holla, my fine fellow, are you not a nigger yourself? And then, as to your colour, it is handsome enough; but still you are no snow-ball."

The man showed his grinning teeth from ear to ear, and said, "Yes massa, but I'm white man's nigger, and he is black man's nigger; and white man's nigger is deal better than black man's nigger. I bought him and another."

"Why don't you sell them then and buy your own freedom?" "No, no, massa, me no such

fool as that. Me got a house and bit garden, those niggers work it, me get the money. Me got wife and children, massa clothe all, feed all, send doctor when sick, take care of me when old. When me sell niggers and have no massa, me lose them; me lose house and bit garden, massa take them away, and no send clothes and doctor. Me be my own massa and free; but me starve when old."

I was much struck with two little woolly-headed girls at an inn on the road to Spanishtown, where they were serving me to the cool milk of a green cocoa nut just knocked off the tree; and I asked them many questions. They might have been six and seven years of age, very pretty, and full of gaiety; both spoke with the kindest affection of their master, and seemed to be treated just as well as children usually are.

I afterwards asked the owner what he would sell one of them for; and he said it was not his wish to part with them, as it would grieve their mother, who was one of his best slaves, and had a large family. The price he fixed was 70*l.*; and I knew he only demanded so large a sum, to put an end to the business.

A friend of mine, just arrived in Jamaica, agreed to accompany a rich planter some little distance into the country; and when the gig came to the door, the latter said to his negro valet, "Where is Pompey? he must go with us?" "Don't know,

massa!" "Well, well," replied the gentleman, if he is not in the house, as the ride will be a short one, you can jump up behind yourself." "Can't go, massa; me no had my breakfas." "Nonsense, don't talk, but jump up immediately." "Me no had my breakfas, massa; no good for my stomar; me can't go."

They drove off without a servant; the planter saying that the man was one of his most faithful and valuable slaves, but pertinacious in having his own way; and that to beat or get angry with him, would only spoil a good servant. My English friend was not so lenient; but declared if his man had acted so in London, he would have knocked him down and then discharged him.

The only remark this called forth, was, "We can't discharge a bad negro in this colony, or even give any one liberty, unless we also secure them a maintenance."

The inhabitants of all our West Indian possessions, are loud in their complaints of the impolitic speeches made in the British parliament relative to slaves; and I must acknowledge they have much reason to find fault, as most men would, whose wives and families and lives are hazarded by experiments.

If the British will emancipate the negroes, they ought certainly to *tax* themselves in order to pay a compensation to the owners; because until within a comparatively recent period, no settler

was allowed to "locate" who did not introduce a certain number of slaves; and I should imagine the idea of free labour in such climates must have received its *quietus* from the late edict of the President of the Negro Republic in Haiti, who therein gives cogent reasons why he must force free citizens to work against their inclinations.

Some few cases of barbarous treatment of slaves do no doubt still occur; but, as the planters remark, are not such things committed in Britain? Do the newspapers give no account of murders, ill usuage to chimney-sweeps or apprentices, and other atrocities? And ought all Britons in consequence to be branded, as tyrants and blood-suckers, oppressors and ferocious villains?

The West Indians do not forget, that several of their bitterest calumniators had first made fortunes by the very system they now decry; that the anti-slavery leaders are endeavouring to raise a reputation for humanity, at the cheap cost of words, without the sacrifice of one shilling in the way of remuneration; and they justly enough think, that before members of parliament or others give unlimited freedom to the blacks already in the Colonies, they ought to visit the islands themselves, and become competent to judge with impartiality and legislate with prudence.

I cannot pretend to give a complete account of the manners and state of society in our West Indian colonies; but I may mention some facts

which must attract the attention of every stranger, and repeat a few anecdotes which either fell under my own observation or of those I can place confidence in.

Probably there is no other spot on the globe where the distinctive limits of society are so rigidly marked out, as between the whites and coloured people of these islands.

The former class includes, not only the new importations from Europe, but all those among their descendants who can boast of an uncontaminated blood; though it must be confessed that the pureness of the stream as exhibited in their complexions, has dwindled into the colour of smooth oily Indian paper; neither white, or brown, or yellow, but an admixture of all three. To the latter class, belong all who show signs of black blood either on their faces or finger nails.

To Englishmen who are accustomed to laugh at all other aristocratic notions but their own, and who daily see riches or talent open the road to all the honours and all the privileges of the national empire; such excessive affectation of superiority among men who are themselves sneered at in the British metropolis, appears not a little ridiculous.

The whites are in general very hospitable to those strangers who are properly introduced, are fond of good cheer and good living, and have parties which are good-naturedly termed "Buck

ram Balls;" where, as the name implies, every thing is truly correct, very lady-like, and vastly uninteresting.

Not so are the dances dignified by the presence of the mulattoes already provided for, or on the look-out for preferment. There may be seen really beautiful girls, with large soft brown eyes and ivory teeth, who make use of every allurement which propriety will admit, to attract attention and captivate admirers.

Partners at those assemblies would indeed be dangerously fascinating even to the coldest heart, if there was not usually a sort of slip-shod gait about their movements, as if their limbs were hung on with wires; and also a drawling mode of speech, not a little grating to the susceptibilities of high-wrought excitement.

Never did a fashionable mother in London, more strenuously urge her daughters to "avoid a younger brother as they would a scorpion," than these beauties are warned to listen to no overtures without a due period of courtship, and the preliminaries of settlements and permanent provision.

Let not my readers be too severe in their censure of these lovely creatures. They are taught from infancy, to consider the situation of a white man's mistress the most honourable one they can obtain. They look upon the tie as binding and sacred; very rarely proving unfaithful during the

longest absences, unless they are abandoned altogether; and they are educated in the firm belief, that no disgrace, no impropriety is so irretrievable as to marry a black.

I remember one night pushing against a door in the house where I lodged, and being asked by a gruff angry voice what I wanted there. The next morning I said to the very pretty mulatto who brought my breakfast, "So I have found you out, Mira, have I?" "Well," replied the girl, "and where's the shame; he is a white man, and I have long known him. My worst enemy cannot accuse me of ever talking to a coloured man, except to tell him to get out of my way."

Accompanied by several others I called one day on an elderly planter, whose emaciated appearance led me to conclude he had long been preparing for another world; but it was far otherwise with my worthy acquaintance. He had some years previously paid down the necessary sum to a mulatto woman for her daughter; and he had ever since been occupying himself with "teaching the young idea how to shoot," waiting till she was old enough to be advanced to the honour of his embraces. This happy event had taken place a few months previous to my arrival.

Another time I was walking with a gentleman who is very much, and I believe very deservedly esteemed in his neighbourhood, when two remarkably fine young women met us, and said, "Ah,

papa, how do you do to-day?" "Very well, my dears; and you, where are you going?"

When they had passed, I asked if they really were his daughters? "Yes," answered he; "I, like other young men at first starting in life had a mulatto mistress, and those two unfortunate girls are my children. I never see them but my heart bleeds. It is true I provide for them, and stoutly declare that I will abandon them if ever they live in the West Indian fashion; but they belong to a despised class in society, education and example are too strong for my threats, and I know it must happen some day or other."

"But why don't you send them to England. They are positively whiter than many females there; besides the prejudices against blood are not so strong in Europe?"

"And who shall I trust?" said the parent. "My wife and young family demand my care. Can I expose two girls to the temptations of a long voyage and friendless country, without a protector?"

A stranger who had attended one of the buckram balls, and had the pleasure of being introduced to the beautiful daughter of a wealthy Colonian; soon afterwards went to one of the dignity dances, where he saw, as he imagined, the same young lady, and dressed precisely in a similar costume. The next day, on meeting the brother, he expatiated warmly on the satisfaction he had enjoyed the previous evening; but the other drew

back proudly, saying, "Sir, you then met my father's daughter, but not my sister."

What shall I say respecting the climate of the West Indies? The meat for dinner is killed the same morning; but that is commonly done in all hot countries.

Is it not heart-breaking, however, after a short absence, to find so many friends and acquaintances dead? Questions and answers similar to the following, I was assured, were by no means unusual after landing:

"How is your lady?" "She died last month."

"Your children?" "One buried; two dying."

"Mr. A——?" "Dead; or fled the climate; or on a sick bed."

The custom of a large party attending the funeral, is not unfrequently the cause of similar ceremonies speedily taking place; for some get overheated, and are exposed to the damp dews on returning; others get melancholy, and fancy themselves ill until they really become so. The very carrion vultures look bloated, and lazy, and eager to feed on your carcass.

Estates in the West Indies are subject to a heavy annual outlay, for repairs, negro clothing, food, &c.; so that if the sugar crop fail, or is too productive, distant proprietors not unfrequently find they have gained a debt rather than a revenue. But I have heard it constantly remarked by those who had come out to look after their

own affairs, that their plantations suddenly became valuable, however disheartening might have been the previous details.

Agents are of course sufficiently indifferent about results, when the pockets of others suffer instead of their own; and they sometimes have a peculiar and no doubt patriotic antipathy, against the system of making remittances of money out of the country.

CHAP. IV.

RECEPTION IN THE LAND OF LIBERTY.—TAMPICO.

LIKE the majority of my good countrymen, I had been fully impressed with magnificent ideas of the productions and resources of the Republic of Mexico!

I had visited Bullock's Museum previous to quitting London, and my mouth had watered at the waxen imitations of such an infinity of delicious fruits. I read his book, and waded through the lengthy publication of Baron Humboldt, during the progress of my voyage; feeding my imagination with descriptions of fruits and flowers, cultivation and game, silver and gold, innocence and rural felicity.

To my heated fancy, the green and fertile islands of the West Indies, rendered doubly pleasing by a long and charming succession of sea and air, and air and sea, as well as the towering range of the Jamaica Blue Mountains; had appeared but as a proper introduction to the far grander and more splendid scenes of the continent I was approaching.

Even the very atrocities committed by the pirates, and the terrors of a north wind in a sandy gulf, increased the interest of the expedition, by apparently adding to its difficulties. And with such feelings, I entered the "Cul-de-Sac" of waters which wash the Mexican shores.

The dew which there fell from a clear blue starlight sky, not only wetted the deck and rigging, but penetrated through a thick great coat; and the scorching heat of the sun only rendered the dampness of the shade more uncomfortable, though the thermometer stood at 86 degrees.

A storm of thunder and lightning, such as I had never before witnessed, but without rain, gratified not a little my expectations of the marvellous: crash followed crash, or murmured slowly along amid the airy mountains which bounded the horizon; while balls of fire burst like volcanoes among the heavy masses, seeming to threaten destruction to earth and heaven.

At length, after a course of 1209 miles from Port-Royal, our vessel hove in sight of the low shore near Tampico.

A tremendous surf beating on the bar; sharks sporting round the ship happy in the prospect of a dinner; a woman carried off by an alligator, and eaten all but a leg which her friends had the satisfaction of rescuing; greeted my arrival at the Land of Promise.

Not a pilot came off. Our salutes and signal

guns were paid no attention to; and an American near us, said he had already waited ten days without being able to land his cargo, though the goods were sold to an inhabitant of the place.

Ah, thought I, the poor devils have just escaped from a galling tyranny, and show their freedom by doing only what they like! My admiration was also increased by hearing on board a British sloop of war just arrived from Vera Cruz, that 500 soldiers had lately mutinied in the Isle of Sacrificios, proclaiming king Ferdinand; when a lieutenant and twenty-five men had taken them prisoners, shooting twenty-four of the party as rebels.

A passenger volunteered to brave the dangers of the bar without a pilot, and we had the satisfaction of seeing him land in safety: but he returned much out of humour, having been received like a dog by the officer commanding the thing called a fort; who ungraciously accused him of being a spy, a heretic, and the Lord knows what.

"My good friend," said the intelligent gentleman who had the command of the mining party, "you don't understand the customs of this people; permit me to try;" and jumping into the boat, he rowed off towards the shore.

His quick eye soon rested on the visage of an elderly serjeant whom he had before met with in the country, and he flew to his neck and embraces; poking his nose over first one shoulder, then the

other, according to the fashionable manner of Mexicans, and all the while thrusting some of that vile stuff called money into his pockets.

"What! don't you remember me?" cried the new comer. "Oh dear, yes, I remember," retorted the good soldier's young wife, who was standing near him.

This serjeant could read and write and keep accounts, and was consequently the right-hand confidant of the governor of the fortress. "Shall we allow," cried he, winking at his superior, "that worthy Christians who bring money and industry to our country, find difficulty in landing? Shame on the thought!"

Horses were brought, and our active intercessor galloped eight or ten miles to the small town of Tampico, where the commandant of the district resided. He there presented himself with open arms to that great man, exclaiming, "Here I am once more in this fine land, and have brought presents for all my friends!"

"Indeed," puffed out the other, knocking the cinders of his cigar against the table; "my house, and all that I have, is at the *disposicion de Usted*." Which means, as I have since found out, "I will keep all I have got, and get as much more from you as I can."

A dragoon was despatched to the bar, with positive orders that every boat and every pilot should immediately push off for our vessel. A salute was

also now fired, in return for ours of long standing; very much to the waste of bad powder and the danger of the fortifications.

Those on board other ships in the roadstead looked at our busy preparations with envy. Ah! thought I, they had not the good fortune to sail with a gentleman who was known and appreciated by these worthy citizens.

The men who manned the boat I went in, were Sambos of Indian and negro extraction, and almost as dark as the latter race. They were a fine set of fellows, and gave me a high idea of the inhabitants of the Republic; but I did not meet with a hundred of the same description in all my travels.

At Tampico much difficulty was made about permitting the entrance of some books and prints; it was necessary for the "priest" to examine them first, and some of the latter were of a very fie-fie tendency. "Bah!" exclaimed a Frenchman present, "offer the Cura a few as a gift; for the maxim of 'live and let live' has found its way to the New World long ago."

The hint was taken, and every thing was speedily declared most Catholic and most correct; but the Cura's fancy was so much tickled, that he insisted upon looking at all those which least deserved the latter appellation.

The inn at Tampico is the best; I have since found, in the whole territory of Mexico, for accommodation and eating; and the fine, stout-looking

negro its master, gave me a most favourable impression of conjugal attachments in that part of the world, for he worked like a horse himself, and allowed his sable beauty to spend his earnings in dress. He was, however, from New Orleans, and had, by his labour in that city, contrived to purchase his own and his wife's freedom.

The fleas and bugs, and other vermin which amused themselves at my expense, induced me to rise before day-break, and stroll among the slight huts of bamboo and palm leaves; where I found the inmates, their dogs and pigs, huddled together on an earthen floor teeming with insects, some few of the wealthier being extended on bamboo stretchers in a state of perfect nudity.

Those who had shaken themselves and quitted their lairs, were variously attired; the children of both sexes, to the age of seven or eight years, were running about naked; the men had a linen cloth only, the women a petticoat round their middles; and most of the latter wore in addition, a loose open "chemise," which served to exhibit to the greatest advantage two long dangling breasts, like bladders one-fourth filled with wind, that flapped about with all their movements.

These sights might perhaps have startled my prejudices; but Bullock had given such a charming picture of the Indian huts, and Indian felicity of this happy region, that I would only see objects in a favourable point of view. Sweet simplicity

and primeval innocence! thought I; these people are no doubt ignorant of vice, and therefore stand in no need of barriers against it. I could only wish they would make more use of cold water and small-tooth combs.

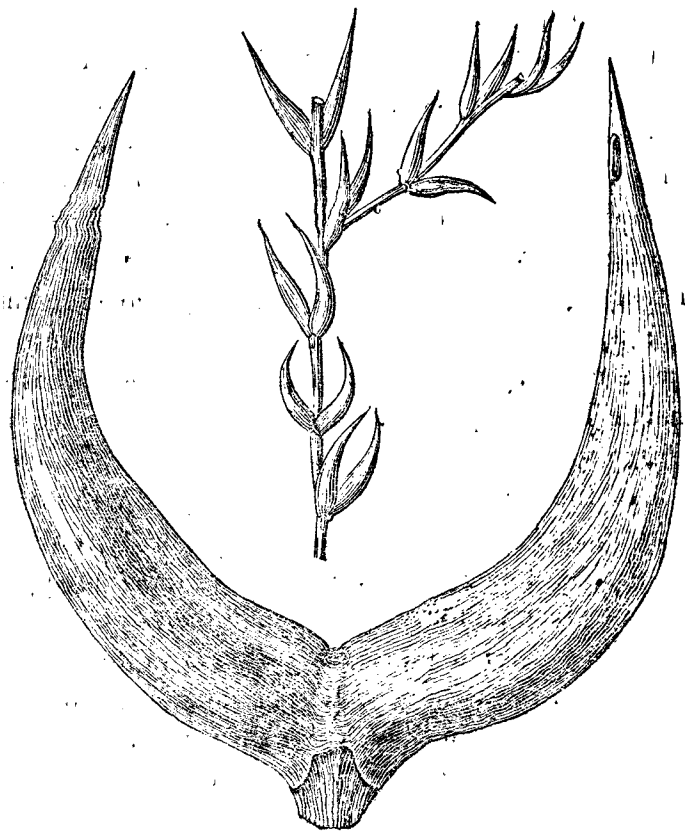
I returned to the inn, perspiring even from my fingers' ends, took off my linen jacket and waistcoat, and seated myself without a neckcloth between the door and window, with a thermometer at 98 degrees. "Never mind," said the negro, "in a few hours the sea breeze will come." It did come soon after noon, and brought some relief.

At dinner, I waged a continual war with the swarms of flies that settled on each morsel of meat. "It is of no use," said an American seated near me; "in republics, the flies will eat as well as you and I." "Undoubtedly," I replied, putting a piece into my mouth; "and, after all, they are not so very bad tasted."

In the evening I again walked out, and observed, in the front of each hut, the family lolling, and picking the vermin from each other's heads. It is truly very nasty, thought I, but they might even do worse.

Taking a turn in the woods with my gun, I found it composed of trees, shrubs, and flowers, quite novel to an European eye, or only seen in a dwarfish state among the exotics of our greenhouses. Many of the bushes were covered with

thorns bigger than my finger. These thorns were hollow, perforated at the point by a small hole, and full of ants. Some trees of enormous size had



fibres hanging from their boughs, which would touch the ground thirty or forty feet below, take root, and become trunks themselves; every crack and hole where birds could perch and seeds be

lodged, was covered with parasitical plants in those wildernesses of heats and damps.

I found numerous green peroquets, small eagles, pies of a black and brown colour, a few partridges or rather quails, and one long thin snake. Tiger-cats are said to abound, and some other wild animals, but I never saw one in all my walks. Two of our dogs were struck by the sun, and darted howling into the thickets; then came back, and seemed seized with a vertigo, turning round and round with great velocity, till their legs failed them; one never reappeared, after he had a second time run off, the other trotted into the town next morning, quite cured. It is singular that canine madness is never heard of, in a country where dogs swarm in every village.

At the spring where the women go to fetch water, and at the night dances in the streets of Tampico, I began to doubt the virtuous purity of my new acquaintances; but then the large earthen jars they carried on their heads were quite in the Egyptian form, and the way of letting a handkerchief hang down their backs also reminded me of the prints of that people; and surely nothing assimilating to the "good old times" could be vicious.

Covered with garapatas, a sort of wood-bug, which falls from the trees and sticks to the flesh like a leech, I pulled out my tormentors by the

head and shoulders, and resigned myself to the arms of Morpheus and the bites of mosquitoes.

Remarking next day the continual parades and severities inflicted on the soldiers, I understood they were deserters and vagabonds condemned to serve on the unhealthy coasts of the Republic, with a few dragoons to keep them in order; and while I acknowledged the justice and good sense of so excellent an arrangement, I took particular notice that their arms and accoutrements were of British manufacture.

My enthusiasm began to mount, but received a timely check from the commandant; who on being shown several valuable articles in order to make his choice, admired them all so much, that no arguments could persuade him to part with any one of them.

An arrangement with the muleteers for proceeding up the country, was no easy matter; for the almost absolute want of water to the distance of seventy or eighty miles, made them unwilling to risk their animals by bringing them from the mountains. Here again the leader of our party got us out of the difficulty.

He cajoled and he flattered, he chatted and he scolded, till they were all in good humour; while I stood by admiring his "savoir faire," and the easy impudence of those he was bargaining with. If a garapata bit one, he placed his leg on

the table, and took off a part of the very little clothing he had about him to catch the intruder with more security.

During the delay, I persuaded with much difficulty two miserable-looking men to row me about the salt lagunes, that I might shoot wild fowl and various birds of the crane species. First, they were afraid of shoals, and alligators, and unknown dangers, in places they did not usually frequent for shrimps and fish; and next, why should they take so much trouble for a few dollars when they had not yet spent all their former earnings?

It is a curious fact, that the soil to a considerable depth on the banks of the river and lake at Tampico, is composed of layers of oyster-shells; although I could never learn that the fish was now found in a living state on the neighbouring coasts.

CHAP. V.

FIRST JOURNEY UP THE COUNTRY.

When we started from Tampico, the party cut a most motley appearance! Our dress was half European, half nondescript; some were mounted on mules, some on horses; all had English saddles and holsters, with a small leather valise behind. Hot German foraging caps and long grey cloth coats decorated many; silk handkerchiefs, stuck under black beaver or white straw hats, hung gracefully over the necks and shoulders of others. Huge sabres and formidable looking fire-arms were thought indispensable appendages by most; and in short, the whole group was droll; the recollection of which affords me still much amusement.

The dragoon who accompanied us in order to extract water from the "bold and independent peasantry," wore a black hat with a broad white band round it; his blue jacket, with red cuffs and collar, he threw before him, and rode in his shirt and white trowsers; his musket was slung across the saddle-bow, his sword hung as usual, his

pouch was buckled behind, and his blanket or great coat was fastened to the crupper.

Thickets of wood and a deep sandy path conducted us to a small clearing in the wilderness, on which stood a hut, occupied by a wealthy breeder, or rather slayer of cattle. It was large, built of bamboo stakes, sufficiently far apart to allow a draught of air, and divided into four apartments; while the high sloping roof was covered with palm leaves, and festooned withinside by cobwebs, insects, and thin ribbons of beef hung up to dry.

The space round the house was covered with the whitened bones of slaughtered cattle, or with offal only half eaten by the vultures; and to this charming retreat do the richer inhabitants of Tampico sometimes convey themselves, when the *vomito* fever is peculiarly virulent.

Our path next entered on sandy flats, between fifty and sixty miles across, where the sand-stone is often seen to break out on the surface, and which are overgrown with lofty fan palm trees; a bunch of fifteen or twenty immense leaves at top is all the foliage, so that the cattle find something to eat under the shade. Nothing could be more monotonous than those forests; for though a few date palms, mingled with the others, bent down their boughs like ostrich feathers in a most pleasing and elegant manner, the long drought had driven all the birds and animals to a distance, so

that our own footsteps alone broke the death-like silence. Butterflies remained, varying in colour, stripes, spots, and beauty, beyond any thing my imagination had depicted; and far beyond the celebrated collection in the East India House.

If there is any truth in the Persian fancy, that the souls of the blessed float about the air under the form of these beautiful insects; they must surely possess the most sociable propensities, but a very bad taste in selecting the place of rendezvous.

Our order of proceeding was as follows:—Rising before day-break, we drank a cup of chocolate or coffee while the animals were loading; and about nine o'clock, halted wherever we could procure water to mingle with our wine and brandy, and then ate a breakfast of cold sausage, ham, or other provisions brought from Europe with the baggage. Two or three more hours of slow riding, under an insufferably hot sun, brought the cavalcade, grim with dust and perspiration, to the hamlet where we stopped the night.

Fowls, which staggered about with drooping wings, open beaks, and panting from heat and want of moisture, were caught, plucked, and thrust warm into an earthen pot with rice; while the expectants of this sumptuous fare swung in their cord hammocks from a tree, or the projecting roof of a hut. Not so the dragoon, and yet greater

personages the muleteers; they forced the inhabitants to give enough water from their scanty stock to satisfy the party and their animals.

This is exactly as it ought to be, thought I, while contemplating the scene at my ease, lolling in my cot, which I rendered delightfully cool by pulling now and then a string fastened to another bough. Authority must be respected, or why did we give presents to the commandant; besides, I am uncommonly thirsty. This last argument would have satisfied me at that moment, if not another drop of water had existed in the country; and I am of opinion Rebecca deserved to marry Isaac, if it was only for making such free use of her pitcher in the well.

It is perhaps superfluous to hint, that there being no post-horses or possibility of changing our animals, the daily progress was not remarkable for rapidity; something under twenty miles in seven or eight hours' hard riding.

Some of the bamboo huts we entered were plastered with mud, and the roofs almost invariably projected a considerable distance to afford shade; the interior had earthen floors trod into hardness, but not evenness, with daubs of holy saints, I suppose from Holland, on the sides, a crucifix and tallow candle, one or two large jars for water, and sometimes a stretcher like a hurdle to sleep on.

The girls until ten or twelve years of age were frequently pretty, but quite old women at twenty-

five; and they showed a little more curiosity on seeing European writing-desks, dress, or other novelties, than was displayed by the apathetic natives in general. The muleteers laughed, talked, drank out of any body's bottle, scratched, killed vermin, or did any thing without scruple, and appeared quite a different race of people. Should a traveller check, without due caution, the freedom, embraces, or proffered cigar of those worthies, ten to one they quit the unlucky wight in spite of threats or money; and if not afraid of their man, may do something still worse.

The nights in those hot regions are enlivened by thousands of fire-flies seen flitting like specks of flame amid the foliage; and by the incessant chirping of green locusts, which seated on the trees in great numbers, make a noise almost as loud as a flight of sparrows. To me the sound was very soothing, perhaps because it never varies.

The village of Tantoyuca has, I should think, three hundred huts of stakes plastered with mud, and many of them whitewashed, with a large and handsome monastery fast falling into decay. Small portions of the surrounding undulations are cultivated with Indian corn; and a few banana trees, with others of the mimosa species, from whose seeds an oil is extracted, give a cheerfulness to the scene. One or two houses had various articles of glass and hardware, cotton goods, and etceteras,

like an English chandler's shop; and I found they had been supplied by Yankee pedlars, who no doubt drive a thriving retail trade. A good looking woman showed me some knives and forks that had become rusty, and was lamenting the loss of their brightness; when her surprise at seeing me burnish them on the hard ground, was not greater than my astonishment at her being ignorant of so simple a remedy, in a country where every man carries a knife at least, if not a sabre.

Tantoyuca deserves honourable mention, from the fact of having a school on the Lancasterian plan, established by a Spaniard, and carried on by him, in spite of the strong opposition of his own countrymen. Among other things, it had desks covered with sand, where the children were taught to write with small sticks; and this is the only instance of the kind I ever met with in the Republic, and the only "Man of Ross" I ever heard even mentioned.

The first stream of water we came to, was at ninety miles from the coast; how delightful it looked, how luxurious it was to bathe and wash off the accumulated filth of five days' journeyings and broilings; besides, we there saw some birds with beautiful plumage, and found plenty of tender green boughs to feed our animals upon.

A few hours' riding brought us to the broken hills, which gradually swelled into oak-covered mountains, where the ascents were shaded by the

thick foliage of spreading trees, quite different from any we had previously seen. I can never forget the hut of Tecoluco, its white and handsome inmates, the grove under which we breakfasted. The "tout ensemble" again stirred up my dormant feelings of happiness in the half-savage life; the preparations for departure were unwelcome, and I lingered till the last of my companions was almost out of sight.

The scenery now became enchanting, valleys watered by rivulets, and woody heights sloping to them; evergreen oaks, with long pendant moss, called "barba Española," waving from every fibre, added freshness to the temperate breezes; orange and citron trees, large and spreading as those of the Siberian crab in our gardens, were scattered about wherever a hut could be descried.

Nothing which I have since seen among the precipices of the Sierra Madre near the Pacific, or on the slopes of the Cordillera about Xalapa, can equal the village of Guatla in climate and situation. The pine-apples were cultivated, and sold three for sixpence; other fruits, though wild, were good; the pleasing plants of the ipecacuanha, the marvel of Peru, (jalap), the tomato, and the calabash, were seen growing in every direction: an eternal spring and verdure seemed to reign, almost free from the drizzling mists and thick fogs so constantly met with in the vicinity of Xalapa.

"But where," demanded I, "is the cultivation?

where is the population? I can see a patch of Indian corn here and there; I can count perhaps sixty huts in this extensive and lovely landscape; but where are the villages, the towns, the——"

"My good friend," said our experienced fellow-traveller, "this Republic to any European who takes the trouble of visiting much of its vast territories, and judging for himself, must appear destitute of inhabitants, of roads, of rivers, and of industry. The commercial importance of a country, without other means of internal communication than the backs of mules, and nine-tenths of whose population are in a state of abject poverty, has been sadly overrated; but I stated all this in England, and nobody would listen to me. Experience and disappointments alone will undeceive the British public."

"Surely," retorted I, "you forget the Table Land of Mexico; where M. Humboldt assures his readers they may roll in their carriages for fifteen hundred miles together."

"Patience, patience!" cried he, "you will soon arrive at this level district, and seeing is believing. For heaven forbid I should venture to contradict so celebrated an author as Baron Humboldt."

Guatla is an Indian village, and was formerly the property of the Jesuits. The interior of its church is not much better than a whitewashed

barn; but many of its utensils are of silver, while the golden cups and *hoste* were really elegant.

The devotion of the Indians was excessive, all crowding as near as possible to the altar, and kneeling promiscuously on the floor for half an hour together; while the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic worship were rendered truly ludicrous, by being shorn of their imposing splendour. Music we had, more than agreeable; for a terrific trumpet, a drum, and a species of bagpipe, created a din both deafening and abominable.

It being Sunday, the market exhibited all the bipeds within leagues; and I found this tribe of Indians did not average more than five feet and a half in height, neither sex having any pretensions to beauty. The women wore their black hair plaited in two long braids down their backs; the men cut theirs quite short, or else wore a pig-tail. The priest seemed to be a good sort of man; and he sold me the best mule I ever procured in the country.

In two days we reached the Cañada, (a ravine), and for twenty-five miles wound up one of the most romantic passes in the world, bounded on each side by lime-stone precipices a thousand or twelve hundred feet high; which, where not quite perpendicular, were studded with shrubs and trees, clematis, convolvulus, creepers, and parasitical plants of innumerable kinds. The cliffs seemed to

have been merely rent asunder by the force of water; the path was infamous, or rather there was no path at all, as we crossed the torrent a hundred and thirty times. My companions expressed satisfaction at getting out of it; but I could willingly have staid there a month.

I was never tired of viewing a spot which united all the charms of rocks, and wood, and water, with the vegetation of a tropical sun. I watched with delight long files of ants moving on the same beaten pathway, and each carrying a bit of green leaf like a flag, many times bigger than themselves. I was childish enough to get off my horse and look at a small beetle, which rolled before it a ball of dirt, wherein were deposited its eggs; at a heavy, ugly toad, at least four times as large as those in England; at different coloured grasshoppers, which seemed to fly rather than jump; but above all, at nests hanging like a netted bag from the very loftiest branches, and which were about fifteen inches long, with a hole near the top to admit the bird.

In some places the organ cactus, rising like a fluted column to the height of twenty or thirty feet, would decorate the steeper parts of the white limestone; and in others, the rivulet would suddenly disappear below the rock, leaving pools, in which I observed small fish, quite white about the head and half the back, but the remaining portion of the body and the tail marked like a perch.

In a nook of this lovely dell, where a level space admits of a few maize fields, is situated the village of Tlacolula, consisting of two hundred families: we took up our quarters at the priest's house. This respectable keeper of the souls, as well as of all the other good things in his parish, made an exchange of a valuable mule for a brass bedstead, bedding, and mosquito net. He was delighted with his acquisition, and cried out impatiently, "My wife, my wife! come and look!"

Wives, I should have said, for four or five of that amiable sex came running in, all of whom seemed, from their manner and appearance, either to have, or to have had, a right to claim that honourable distinction.

The bed was removed to the good Cura's room with great merriment, and I know not what took place; but this I do know, that whereas we slept in the outer apartment, himself and the two youngest of the dirty ladies above-mentioned passed the night in the inner one. This personage was a monk, and did infinite credit to his order by his shrewdness and self-possession.

When liberty, equality, and a comfortable degree of anarchy, was first proclaimed, the worthy man made many serious and uneasy reflections as to the line of conduct he ought to pursue, in order to secure his present booty, and have the means of fearlessly grasping at more; but as he well knew the state of knowledge which existed among

parishioners whom he himself instructed, he addressed them after mass very much to this effect: "My friends, we are now all equal! You must no longer look up to me as your father and as your judge, as one who had authority from heaven to teach, and from the king to rule. I have become one of yourselves, having no more rights and privileges than you. I can no longer desire you to send me a family weekly, to provide my meals and clean my house, and fetch me wood and water, and serve for other purposes. No, we are all now citizens; and with the same hands that I prepare the sacred sacrament, I must in future dress my dinner, and perform the lowest household offices!"

The poor Indians, in tears, and horror-struck at such a monstrous sacrilege, exclaimed with one voice, "We won't be citizens! We will continue to be Indians! You shall continue our master, and beat us when you think fit; and we will furnish you with a family weekly, as hitherto, and with every thing else you may want!"

The holy monk retired amidst the benedictions of the people, delighted at the success of his stratagem; and charitably laughed at them afterwards as a pack of irrational blockheads, "*gentes irracionales.*" When I paid him a visit, I found his authority undiminished; for several trembling Indians, with downcast eyes, approached without their hats, and, kneeling on one knee, humbly

kissed the hand which was graciously extended towards them.

Our young and handsome muleteer treated this worthy with much less ceremony; for, after romping a good deal, he fairly kissed one of his wives before his face.

Near the upper end of the Cañada we first saw the pine tree; and then mounting a long and very steep path, got to the summit of the first range of the four Cordilleras; where we found the Hacienda (farm-house) of Pinulco, with wheat, barley, rose and peach trees, and fine blackberry bushes. I found it quite necessary to cover myself with a blanket at night, though the thermometer stood no lower than 60; but the feelings and the temperature are not always in unison.

Zacualtipan is a town of 4000 inhabitants, with many of its houses built of stone, and the roofs composed of wooden shingles. It is the chief place of the mountain district we were passing over, and carries on a tolerable trade in leather; but I did not observe any remarkable difference in their tan-pits and mode of dressing the skins from our own.

In the church I saw glass windows, for the first time since my landing; and at the back part of it, outside, a curious carving in stone, which seemed designed to unite the ancient Mexican and the Christian mythologies. It represents a venerable

looking king with a large beard, above him the sun surmounted by the cross, and four angels around.

In this vicinity we found the maguey, or American aloe, the elder bush, apples and pears without much taste, because the trees were neither pruned or grafted; and great numbers of swifts and swallows.

We soon after entered on a long succession of abrupt ridges and steep descents, completely covered with cinders, porous-looking stones, and other volcanic remains. This dreary and tiresome tract of country has no other species of vegetation than the stiff nopal, or prickly pear, various sorts of the cactus, and stunted mimosa bushes; except where two exceedingly deep and narrow valleys can boast of a rivulet.

On one of these dark-looking heights we overtook the priest and deputy of Zacualtipan, who was on his way to the Congress at Mexico; and being an invalid, was carried in an arm-chair on poles, with a white canopy over it, by relays of obsequious Indians. He got out to receive us, and stood on a piece of European carpet, reverently laid down for that purpose.

His manga, or cloak, thrown around him a la Español, and his large broad-brimmed hat, gave him a decidedly picturesque appearance; while the circumstance of three females on horseback being with him, was quite characteristic. In truth, it was impossible to have seen this represen-

tative of the nation under more favourable circumstances; for volcanic rocks, surmounted by the nopal, were scattered about in every direction, and a carrion vulture hovering over us might well pass for the eagle.

The ascent of the zig-zag path to the convent of Santa Monica is justly dreaded by all muleteers, for either the bones or carcass of an animal is met with every fifty yards; and it is not pleasant to dig your spurs into the horse at each start he makes, while you are obliged to grasp his neck and mane for fear of slipping over his tail into the depths you have quitted. Still less is it agreeable to toil up the side of such a mountain, where vultures are gorging at each step, either too full and careless to hop out of your way, or else flapping their heavy wings in your face like the knell of a death-bell. Hideous birds they most certainly are; but being the only scavengers in the Republic, I cannot but class them among the most indefatigable and useful of her citizens.

We were now fairly on the "Table Land;" extensive tracts of arid stony ground, which in the rainy seasons are covered with coarse grass, and are bounded by mountains varying in height from 1000 to 6000 feet. Passing those ridges at the lowest point of elevation, the path winds down into a plain of similar appearance. If you choose to make detours of many leagues, and follow the course of the different ranges, there is generally

some one spot over which nine stout mules *will* drag a strongly-made coach, by dint of sticks and stones, shouts, and kicks in the belly.

What I at this time thought of the "Table Land" has been most fully confirmed by all my subsequent excursions into various districts of the country; and undoubtedly the central part of the territory of Mexico ought rather to be called a very mountainous region, standing on a base 6000 or 7000 feet above the sea.

There is, I know, from the report of two English gentlemen who travelled over it, a vast tract north of Guanaxuato and San Luis Potosi, which may most properly be called Table Land; but Baron Humboldt never visited that part of the Republic, and I presume he describes only what he actually saw.

CHAP. VI.

CITY OF MEXICO AND ITS ENVIRONS.

When I first stood on the summit of the Crucis ridge, and looked down on the city and valley of Mexico, I was enchanted with the prospect. The distance, the elevation of 3000 feet from which I gazed, the clear atmosphere heated by the rays of a tropical sun, combined to give objects an indistinctness which heightened the charm, and yet left all the more prominent features completely discernible.

The extent of the city and its glistening domes, the expanded sheet of water beyond it, the magnificent mountain scenery that closed in the vale, and the snowy peaks of the two volcanoes rising proudly towards the sky; left nothing to wish, except that fancy might not be disappointed. Pardon me, I did wish for a fire to warm my fingers, for they were frozen while I rode over those cold heights, although my almanac told me it was Midsummer-day.

Thick forests of silver fir cover these western boundaries of the great vale, and among them I saw several very beautiful specimens of the blue

jay and other birds. As we descended, some miserable huts, where pulque and fricolis (white beans) are sold to all who love grease and eructations, met our sight; soon after we got below all the trees, and went over a long dreary extent of whitish-looking lime-stone, but which, I understood from a geologist, was composed of volcanic remains.

Nothing flourished here but the aloe or pulque plant; which scattered about amid other foliage, has a pleasing effect, but when seen in rows has a stiff disagreeable appearance. The villages at the foot of the ridge were in a most ruinous state; the two long aqueducts were low and not very ornamental, and a road across half a league of morass conducted us into the city itself.

Mexico is decidedly the most regularly built and the handsomest town I ever saw, but is situated on a vast flat of horrible aspect; a wet marsh on one side, a barren level covered with depositions of soda on the other; houses built on piles, which frequently sink deeper into the swamp, and streets so devoid of the slightest inclination, that after a heavy storm the water will remain stagnant in them for hours together.

When this metropolis was a second Venice, rising from the bosom of an immense lake which washed the very bases of the mountains, it must have had a far nobler appearance; but after three centuries of strenuous activity, the Spaniards have succeeded in driving back the sheet of water to

the distance of three or four miles, although they never could contrive to drain the aguish marshes they had thus so prudently created.

Several medical men have assured me, that if the city had not been elevated 7000 feet above the ocean, and amid the snowy summits and keen atmosphere of the Cordilleras, it would be absolutely uninhabitable for the human race. And surely the devastation of the measles and fever in the autumn of 1825, must substantiate that opinion; for it was currently believed, that no less than 20,000 persons were carried off in the city and valley alone.

The streets of this beautiful city are all straight and at right angles to each other, most of them a mile or a mile and a quarter in length, as wide as Pall Mall; and from the peculiar style of architecture with flat roofs and ornamented fronts, there is nothing seen in any direction either monotonous or shabby. The outskirts however, like those of all Spanish cities I have ever heard spoken of, are full of ruins, rubbish, and filth; and even in the really splendid interior of the town, there are many handsomely decorated fronts which conceal the most dirty and wretched abodes of the poorer classes.

The numerous domes and towers of its churches and monasteries, some constructed of stone, others covered with painted tiles, give a gay and oriental appearance to the Mexican capital. And now

that European workmen and furniture have been introduced, the houses of the more wealthy inhabitants are beginning to be fitted up not only in a comfortable but even elegant manner.

The houses are of stone, and much superior, I think, in construction to any thing we can boast of in Britain. They are built round an open court, either with two or three stories above the ground-floor, and balconies to each, which are usually filled with pots of flowers or small shrubs.

The roofs are flat, and form a pleasant terrace to walk on, being also sometimes ornamented with flowers and shrubs; but much more frequently are tenanted by large ferocious dogs, which effectually deter thieves from attempting to swing down into the balconies of the inner court, and rob the house.

The ground tenement is let out as shops, or occupied as stables, coach-houses, and granaries; the court is entered by a large gateway, and a broad handsome stone staircase conducts to the balconies and apartments of the family, where the rooms are generally found to be lofty and cool. Most houses are painted on the outside either of a white, green, reddish, or yellow hue, so that the eye is constantly relieved by an agreeable contrast; and withinside, the inhabitants have a very pleasing mode of imitating with colours the flowers and patterns of our paper.

The pavement of the principal streets is excel-

lent, being of small stones with a narrow covered channel in the centre as a drain, and with good flag footpaths on each side; they are lighted with large glass lamps containing oil; and water is conveyedby pipes from the aqueducts to the different houses.

The cathedral is a large heavy building, standing on the site of the Aztec Temple, and as is supposed, burying under its foundations many of the most valuable curiosities of that interesting people. It has evidently been constructed at various epochs, being partly Gothic, partly Grecian, and partly of a modern style of architecture. Its interior is richly gilt and ornamented with silver chandeliers, but in a gaudy bad taste, like most of the churches and convents of the city. Being larger, however, it has perhaps a finer effect; and the carved wood and other decorations of the high altar, are decidedly well executed.

The palace is a very long low building, painted white, containing several neat courts, most of the public offices, a small botanical garden, and the apartments of the president of the Republic. It is imposing only from its size, and stands on the spot where Cortez and his followers defended themselves and their prisoner, Montezuma, from the attacks of the Indians.

A very extensive square is in front of the palace, the cathedral being on the right, and the house of the Duke de Monteleone, the Neapolitan

descendant of Cortez, in front. A large portion of this square is occupied by a bazaar, or number of low wooden shops, which would certainly be pulled down if the rent was not a serious object of revenue to so necessitous a government.

In the centre of this open space formerly stood the bronze statue of Charles IV., which is deservedly reckoned one of the finest casts ever made. It is now preserved in the court of the unfrequented University, and certainly our statue in Hyde Park is neither equal to it in size nor execution.

The College of Mineria is a remarkably elegant structure, with Corinthian columns; but the piles of its foundation have sunk so much in some places, as to endanger the whole; and this beautiful building has the additional disadvantage of being placed in one of the streets, although it requires a large square to show it off in all its proportions. The collections of natural history and minerals deposited within this establishment, are by no means valuable, indeed much inferior to what the most superficial observer would be led to expect.

The extensive building formerly used as the royal tobacco manufactory, is rather handsome; and near it is a place surrounded with a rampart and ditch, and I believe considered as the citadel. The two aqueducts enter the city on this side, after running over the morass, on a vast number of

small arches from twelve to fifteen feet high, at distances of three and of five miles.

They are built of stone or brick, with white plaster, and in both cases the channel for the water is open at top, which I have little doubt is the reason, under the effects of a powerful sun, why almost all new comers to Mexico are afflicted with the dysentery.

The Mint forms a part of the Palace, and deserves a particular description, more on account of the vast sums of money it has sent into circulation, than from the excellency of its machinery, which is really below criticism.

There are two spacious, lofty apartments, and some few smaller workshops. The bars of silver contain about 1000 ounces each, and are rolled out to the proper thickness and width, when a man pushes them under a stamp which cuts out the round dollars singly. These are then put one by one under a heavy stamp, which is turned by manual force; and the impression is thus made on both sides at once, but very rarely exactly in the middle of the dollar, as few men's eyes and fingers are sufficiently accurate to judge hastily the centre. The coin is next whitened by a chemical mixture, and the edges are finally marked by a hand machine. In this clumsy mode 850 dollars can be finished in the hour; and formerly 800 or 1000 men were employed in the different processes, while twenty-eight millions of dollars were coined

annually. In the year 1826, only 200 men were employed, and only three millions of dollars sent out into circulation; in addition to four millions more, coined at the different mints now established in various cities of the Federation. I am inclined to suspect, even that sum was grossly exaggerated, although I had the information from one of the principal managers of the establishment.

For coining silver, the charge is five per cent.; but if any gold is to be extracted, then eight per cent. is demanded; and every few years, the brick flooring is found to have absorbed so much silver dust, that it is taken up, ground to powder, and amalgamated with profit.

The Hospital, founded by Cortez, is tolerably well endowed, and possesses the painting of the Virgin which that hero always carried with him; besides a round table of one solid piece of wood, said to have been among his furniture. Until lately his bones were also exhibited in a glass sanctuary; but a tumult among the lower classes, in 1824, in order to destroy all vestiges of that great conqueror, caused the government to order those relics to be removed and buried.

I must take this opportunity of remarking, that there never was throughout the territories of New Spain any public memorial or inscription to the honour of that man, who had first added them to the dominions of his native prince.

The Museum of Painting is not deserving of much notice; for I saw only one original by Morillo, a few copies, and casts in plaster of Paris of most of the ancient statues of Greece and Rome. Attached to the cathedral is a library, and several wealthy individuals have indifferent collections of books and minerals; but it was so systematically the endeavour of the Spanish government and priests to keep the Mexican population in ignorance, that any attempt at improvement, or cultivating the liberal sciences, was met by the most determined opposition.

The Theatre was tolerably neat when I first visited it, but had a wretched set of performers, and was rendered highly disagreeable by the slovenly dress of the audience and dense fumes of tobacco. Eighteen months' free intercourse with strangers, had, however, effected great improvements both in the acting and the appearance of those who attended it; and I was delighted to observe, that all the ladies in the boxes had at least given up any public display of the use of cigars.

This city also contains some baths, a "Table d'Hôte" established by a Frenchman, and a "Sociedad Mexicano," where a room can be hired; but the capital may truly be said to be destitute of inns, as neither beds or other conveniences are to be found in the few houses so called; four bare

walls once white-washed, a roof, and perhaps two boards to lie down on, are the extent of the accommodations.

The Alameda is an enclosed space about as big as Lincoln's-inn Fields, planted with avenues of trees, and ornamented with some small fountains. It has a road round it, to which it is the fashion for ladies to drive, about four in the afternoon; and their coaches being drawn up in a long line, often remain stationary for one or two hours.

The gentlemen usually ride their small but pretty looking horses of the Andalusian breed, to the same spot; where their leather botas, rich velvet breeches, waistcoats, and capas, together with the jingling caparisons and long tails and manes of their spirited animals, make a novel and pleasing appearance. A clean skin, however, is far from being considered a requisite to gentility.

The long road planted with poplars called the Paséo, and another near the canal of Chalco named Las Vigas, are sometimes chosen as the places for fashionable resort; and if the handsomely painted coaches were not attached to such heavy clumsy wheels, and drawn by two mules disproportionately small, the *tout ensemble* of equipages and riding costumes would have a brilliant effect.

The dress of the ladies is, I believe, the same as in Spain; mantillas of black silk, or of lace, are thrown over their heads instead of bonnets, forming an elegant but rather sombre looking

mode. It is rare to encounter much beauty either of face or figure; but great extravagance is displayed in the purchase of silk stockings, and shoes are worn so long quartered as to make the foot look fat and broad. The truth is, that the feet of the Mexican belles are not remarkable for smallness; though they pride themselves greatly on that peculiar charm among others, and squeeze themselves proportionately. But what I considered of far more importance, was that the fineness of the stockings not unfrequently revealed the dirt which was under them:

> "And there I see such black and grained spots,
> As will not leave their tinct."

I should estimate the population of this metropolis at about 150,000; among which number are included 2000 monks and nuns, numerous priests, and retainers of the church, a large body of men without homes, like the Lazaroni of Naples, and 1800 well-dressed and tolerably disciplined soldiers who protect the public tranquillity.

The traffic of the city is carried on by mules, donkeys, or the backs of the lower orders of inhabitants; the markets are well supplied with vegetables and fruits from Chalco Tezcuco, and the villages of the valley, by means of a narrow dirty canal; and considering how little care or science is bestowed on those productions, they are surprisingly fine, although not numerous in the va-

The Capulina or Mexican Cherry.

J. D. C. Sowerby fecit.

London, Published by Carpenter & Son, Old Bond Street, March 20th 1828.

rieties. A good Scotch gardener who understood perfectly the art of grafting, pruning, etcetera, would soon realise a fortune in a country where he might enjoy almost every variety of climate and soil; provided he did not get knocked on the head.

The cattle and sheep for the supply of the capital, are driven from a considerable distance; milk and butter are neither plentiful nor good; pine-apples and other fruits of the hot country, have lost much of their flavour by being cut before ripe; strawberries I have seen, but not often, and the cherries are very bitter, and of a different species from those in England; gooseberries and currants are not known, and the few walnut and olive trees existing rarely bring their fruit to perfection.

The expense of house-rent and of living in the city of Mexico, I was often assured, was much greater than in London; and perhaps there is not a spot in the world where property is so unequally divided.

As it may perhaps be interesting to some of my readers, I will enumerate the prices of a few articles I was obliged to purchase in the shops now established in this republican metropolis; but must premise, that the workmanship was but indifferently good:—A wooden wardrobe, better than common, 13*l.*; chests of polished wooden drawers, 8*l.* and 10*l.*; stained table with three drawers, and very bad, 11*l.*; servants' mattrasses,

4*l.* and 5*l.*; coat, 9*l.*; hats, according to fineness, from 2*l.* to 3*l.*

When a stranger stands on the flat roof of a house near the centre of the city, nothing can be more striking than the surrounding prospect. Long well-built streets run off in every direction; the marshy and arid flats are hid from the view; and the clearness of the atmosphere causes the mountains to appear rising from the very suburbs, in all their variety of rocks and woods and snowy summits, although they are in reality at a considerable distance.

Here, however, ends the bright side of the picture; it is taken like the sketches of artists, from the most favourable station; and gives about as just an idea of the whole, though it faithfully delineates the parts under inspection.

The city of Mexico may be taken as no inapt illustration of the Spanish dominion in America; vast and magnificent to the eye, but almost entirely destitute of the real attributes of order and security.

The ruined suburbs afford places of concealment to numerous individuals, for the purpose of committing robberies and even murder. It is highly imprudent to walk about the streets after dark; and no one thinks of taking a ride into the environs without pistols and companions.

Highway robberies in its vicinity and that of other large towns, are not committed by the lowest

classes of the community, but by gamblers of a higher order; as has been proved by some late arrests, and subsequent bribery to escape from prison. These worthy officers and others sally forth well mounted in large parties; and with the lazo (a noose) drag their victim from his horse, strip him of his clothes and cash, and if resistance is made, not unfrequently assassinate.

These persons are usually so dexterous in throwing the lazo, and such excellent horsemen, that they rarely miss their aim at thirty or forty feet distance; but the most effectual mode to avoid the attack, is to put spurs to your horse, your head bent down to his neck, and charge your assailant with promptness; for the lazo will then most probably pass beyond you, and the rascal may be cut down before he recovers himself.

The natives are, however, very good swordsmen, and pistols alone will inspire them with awe when they have the advantage of numbers; in consequence of which weapon, few Europeans* have

* A short time after I left, I understand an English gentleman, newly arrived in Mexico, was stopped, robbed, and stripped, close to the gate of the city. He was riding quietly about the town and environs, comparing the open pages of Bullock's book, with what he saw himself; when he was disagreeably interrupted by a lazo, and rather a violent fall from his horse. Some five-and-twenty Mexican gentlemen rode by; but seeing what was going on, they very prudently did not interfere, had they done so, one of two evils must have occurred, either the Englishman would have got stabbed, or their brave countrymen would have lost their booty.

been openly assaulted, while some ludicrous instances have occurred of Mexican gentry coming back to the town without their shirts.

The state of the police depends in reality upon the character of the individual who happens to be at its head; for on one of my visits to the capital, I found such effectual measures adopted, as made violence almost unknown; but on other occasions, have met many who never went out to an evening party in their own coaches without having a pistol in hand.

Notwithstanding the optical delusion caused by the pureness of the air, the valley of Mexico is really of very great extent, and so flat, that during the rainy season, a large portion becomes covered with water. It is then not unfrequently the case, that the streets of the city are for a short time impassable on foot; and those who are in a hurry, or cannot send for a hackney coach, hire porters to carry them on their shoulders.

Some European gentlemen gave me a laughable account, how when these fellows had got them well into the centre of the water, they stopped and demanded an increase of pay; and if the thoughtless *voyageur* displayed the slightest disinclination to accede to the request, he was quietly deposited in the gutter while the other escaped.

The immense inundation called Lake of Tezcuco still exists; its waters are salt, or rather I should say brackish, and I was repeatedly assured no part of it was seven feet deep. Fish are caught

in it, very boney, and I think indifferently tasted; but the margins of this great pool are covered with reeds and sedges, on which myriads of flies deposit their eggs, and which are carefully scraped off and collected.

Of this singular substance, a species of dirty looking *caviare* is made, which I took good care never to taste, but understood it to be a deliciously greasy food. Surely the French cook who favoured posterity with three hundred and sixty-four modes of dressing an egg, and bequeathed a legacy to any man who would discover another to fill up the year, was unfortunate in not having visited the Republic of Mexico.

Chapultepec is an isolated rock, two miles west of the city, and about a hundred and fifty feet high, on which the viceroy Galvez began to build a villa, but was speedily commanded to desist by the Spanish government, who thought it had somewhat the resemblance of a fortress. Tradition asserts Montezuma to have had a palace on this spot, and it is not improbable; for the views are superb, and at its base are a considerable number of the largest cypress trees I ever beheld; almost the only ones deserving the name of timber in the whole valley.

Beyond this is a large stone flour mill, with a stream of water sufficient for any purposes; and a little to the south, is the village of Tacubaya, where a Belgian has established an excellent, but

very expensive tavern, much frequented by all Europeans. At this place is the handsome stone palace of the archbishop, with an extensive garden of most of the fruits, flowers, and vegetables of Europe; grafting has also been somewhat attended to; and the whole domain, though now neglected, might easily be made a truly splendid residence.

The road to Tacuba, along the north-west branch of the vale, is through a succession of miserable villages, but highly cultivated country; and is, by its fruit and other trees, by far the most pleasing part of the great valley. To the south of the capital, the flat extends about fourteen miles; the first half being swampy meadows, with a few rows of the spreading poplar tree; but the latter half has been drained and cultivated by the family of Vivancourt, wherever the volcanic remains have not rendered it impossible.

The village of San Augustine, extolled as the pride of the valley, is situated at its southern extremity; but I felt much disappointment at seeing large melancholy-looking houses, amid wildernesses of apple and pear trees, never pruned, and never grafted, under which luxuriated a crop of weeds. The neighbouring village of San Angel has a very similar appearance; but I there found the little animal called a cameleon, which put me in mind of a small flat lizard.

The church of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, the patroness of the Republic, is placed three

miles and a half north of the city, at the foot of a long peninsula of mountains. She chose the situation herself, and so far exhibited good taste, as she was forced to remain in the country; but the interior of the temple has nothing to recommend it, except massive silver chandeliers and balustrades, various ornaments and candlesticks of gold, and thirty silver statues, each eighteen inches high.

In writing the above description of the city and valley of Mexico, I have endeavoured to forget all I had read or heard on the subject, wishing to state only what I saw and felt and thought myself, when I was on the spot.

Tastes differ so much, that I may be pardoned for disliking an open, flat, swampy plain; though some travellers have exalted it into an earthly paradise, and thus increased the disappointment.

Had we merely heard in Europe, that a large vale of meadow and maize and water, elevated on the summits of mountains 7000 feet high, and surrounded by ridges and snowy peaks which rose from 2000 to 10,000 feet higher, contained a regular and handsomely-built city of 150,000 inhabitants; would not that have been enough to excite both curiosity and astonishment?

I have staid on the roofs of the houses in Mexico for a considerable time together, admiring the beauty of the buildings, the clearness of the sky, and the mountainous outline on every side. I have

watched till the snow-capped peak of Popocatepetl, or the lower but far finer and broken summit of Iztaccihuatl, have been distinctly visible above the masses of clouds; when they have been burnished by the rays of a setting sun, after all below was in darkness: and few men could have been more highly gratified.

My enthusiasm, however, has not blinded me; I still disliked the swampy bleak flat which met my view each time I quitted the town. It did not make me transform half a dozen wild fruits, small stony wretched grapes, peaches like green almonds, or bad turnips, into the luscious productions of the West Indies or English hot-houses. Neither did it warm my fancy so much, that the half-naked miserable-looking Indians and mixed castes who crowd the streets, shivering at each rain-drop or gust of wind, under a ragged sort of blanket then closely wrapped round them to the chin; that these melancholy-looking wretches should seem the Arcadian peasants of poetic fiction.

CHAP. VII.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

Previous to entering into any further details of the present state of Mexico, I think my readers will be desirous of having a succinct account of the Revolution which shook off the Spanish yoke; and I believe I may confidently assert, that the following statement is correct in all its leading features.

A short time before the year 1810, when Spain was in the hands of the French, and its king their prisoner, Iturrugaray, the viceroy of Mexico, received secret instructions not to obey any orders from Madrid; but to preserve, at all hazards, the provinces under his authority for the royal family.

Accordingly he issued a proclamation, or rather an appeal, to the Mexicans; in which he stated, that their sovereign being no longer at liberty, and the cabinet of Madrid being under the control of the French, he could not consent to degrade himself and those under his authority, by attending to any mandates from thence.

He should therefore continue to govern ac-

cording to the known wishes of his master, until some happy circumstance might again place their beloved monarch on his throne.

The sensation created by this paper was tremendous: for however deadening to the human faculties the Spanish policy had been, yet it was impossible not to find among six millions of people some spirits of talent and energy.

The phrase "disobey orders from Madrid," had never before been heard in New Spain. The idea of consulting Mexican feelings, and soliciting Mexican support, awakened hopes. The dawn of liberty and a national existence glimmered upon them.

The parish priests, who hated the government because it appointed monks and Spaniards only to situations of dignity and profit; the army, the lawyers, the great bulk of the community, saw some chance of preferment opening to them, although they were born Creoles.

They hailed Iturrugaray as their protector, their patron, and were submissive to his orders; but in the cities of Mexico and Vera Cruz resided many of those wealthy Spaniards who had long enjoyed the monopoly of the Indies; and they saw with alarm a state of things which threatened speedily to put them on an equality with the natives.

These *disinterested* men held a secret conference, and some of the most resolute entering at midnight the palace of the viceroy, made him and

his family prisoners; declared the Spanish general Venegas their governor, and hurried the unfortunate Iturrugaray to the coast and to Cadiz, where the monopolist party threw him into prison.

At the moment when these occurrences took place, there were throughout the vast territories of New Spain about 15,000 Spanish troops; but scattered in small detachments at so great a distance from each other, that their union was almost impossible.

No sooner was the deposition and imprisonment of Iturrugaray known, than discontent and insurrection broke out in various parts of the kingdom. "Must we then," cried some, "be basely sacrificed, right or wrong, to treacherous French usurpers; merely that a few avaricious merchants may not lose the privilege of selling us cloth and wines, and European commodities, at an extravagant price?"

The secular clergy, who in the parishes at a distance from the capital were almost all Creoles, and exercised an unlimited influence over the people, availed themselves of the superstition of the population, in order to create a revolt.

The priest Hidalgo in the north, collected together a considerable mob of the inhabitants of Durango; who are a much finer and hardier race than those of the southern districts. Full of enthusiasm and religious veneration for their leader, they passed through the open town of Guanaxuato,

and continuing their route, increasing in numbers as they advanced, arrived on a small plain amongst the summits of Las Crucis, the lofty ridge which separates the valleys of Toluca and Mexico. Here they found the Spanish army posted, with six pieces of cannon on a small mound; and determined to dispute the gorge through which the road now passed.

Hidalgo, who was no soldier, instead of turning to the left and marching down the slopes of the mountains at once to the capital, elevated the Cross, and attacked the enemy in front. He is stated to have had 80,000 followers; his opponents, I believe, though the accounts on this point vary exceedingly, consisted of 4000 Spaniards and 15,000 Indians.

The insurgents advanced *en masse*, and the Spanish artillery committed a horrible massacre; but the Cross was still raised, and the determined resolution of the northern mob overthrew every obstruction. Some individuals are positively stated to have rushed up to the cannon and thrust their hats into the muzzle, thinking by that means to have prevented the effect of the grape-shot; and when they were blown to atoms, other volunteers supplied their places.

The Spaniards fled, and were pursued across the pass; and Hidalgo soon found himself within twelve miles of the city of Mexico, which was spread out below, in the full view of his army.

Some soldiers had, however, taken refuge in two or three houses which line the road at this spot, and repulsed the first feeble attacks made on them.

Hidalgo, who might have crossed the open fields to the right or the left unmolested, was either seized with a panic at the greatness of his undertaking; or, what is much more probable, was unwilling to see so fine a metropolis rendered a scene of carnage and plunder by infuriated fanatics. He beat the retreat, marched back to the north, maintained the war for some time with various success, and was at length taken prisoner and shot.

Long before his death, however, other patriot chiefs had sprung up on every side. The priest Morelos, an amiable man, assisted by General Teran, who had been a captain in the Spanish artillery, carried on a harassing warfare for a long time in the vicinity of the road to Acapulco; and when he was surprised and shot, his adherents dispersed, but Teran retired with a party into the province of Oaxaca.

Guadalupe Victoria, now the president of the Republic, whose real name is Fernandez, is a native of one of the northern states. He quitted the profession of the law, to which he had been bred, and was one of the first to join the cause of independence. Victoria cut up the communications between the capital and Vera Cruz, seeking refuge, when overpowered, among the fastnesses of Orizaba.

Guerrero, a muleteer, and without education, but one of those extraordinary men which revolutions sometimes produce, took possession of the abrupt mountain ridges which cover the southern parts of the provinces of Mexico and Valladolid, and carried on the war systematically. He fortified the passes and commanding heights; took copper from a neighbouring mine to pay his troops; formed an establishment for supplying his mounted followers with saddlery; retreated before superior numbers; and, by his activity and superior knowledge of the country, deprived his enemies of water and other supplies. From the commencement to the end of the struggle, he baffled all attempts against him, and was never driven out of his fastnesses.

To put down so many insurrectionary corps, the Spanish authorities, who were continually changing in Mexico, endeavoured to make up for their real weakness by the terror of their sanguinary punishments. They despatched Iturbide, a Creole, but one of their best officers, into the north, who, marching to the populous and defenceless town of Guanaxuato, which had shown symptoms of joy when Hidalgo took possession of it, is said to have put to death in cold blood 16,000 of the inhabitants, and allowed his soldiers free quarter on the rest.

General Nigreti, a Spaniard, advanced against Guerrero, determined to make a severe example of some of those landholders who supplied that

chief with provisions and money. On his arriving near the wealthy cattle hacienda of Cutio, its proprietor, who had lent Guerrero 20,000 dollars, and supplied his soldiers with horses and meat, fled with his servants to a lofty precipice. An old man, the steward, was left on the premises; and from his son, as well as the owner himself, I had the following account.

"Where is your master?" demanded Nigreti, enraged at finding his victims had escaped; and on the poor fellow's replying he did not know, had him tied up by the wrists and flogged till he cried out he was not sure, but thought his master must be concealed in that mountain—pointing to the right one, because it was the only one of the district which had water. On this information being given, he was shot, and a label attached to his body with these words: "Thus Nigreti treats rebels and deceivers."

Some of the most active of the Spanish soldiers were then selected, and sent to seize those on the rock; where they came so unexpectedly on the party, that the master had barely time to throw away his musket, sword, and clothing; and leaping from crag to crag, escaped; but most of those with him were taken back to the farm and shot.

Guerrero and his men, who from the mountain tops on the other side of the deep and rapid river Bolsas, could see what was passing, vowed revenge. It was the death of the old steward who

had remained in the house, which struck them as an unjustifiable murder, even in a civil war; and the first eight or ten Spaniards who fell into their hands, were told to remember the hacienda of Cutio, and immediately massacred. Iturbide wrote to the viceroy, from the north, on the eve of Christmas-day: "I have just sent the souls of three hundred villains to hell, in honour of the blessed Virgin."

The father of Bravo, a man of property, and much respected, was dragged from his house and killed, because his son had joined the patriots. When Bravo received the intelligence he had some hundreds of prisoners in his hands; and ordering them to be brought before him, he said: "I have this moment heard of my poor old father having been murdered by the Spaniards, and you, no doubt, expect to be sacrificed in revenge; but to show the different principles of those who fight for liberty and those who uphold despotism—go, you are free!"

Bravo was afterwards taken prisoner himself, but the Spaniards were ashamed to put him to death after such an heroic action; and he is now vice-president of the Republic.

The cause of independence languished. Guerrero, though he maintained his position, and even pushed a party to the city of Valladolid, where he levied a contribution, was not able to make the patriots triumph. They had split into factions.

Numerous Congresses, composed of the worst description of lawyers, shop-keepers, and ignorant priests, had sprung up in every direction, and these self-constituted authorities, who had taken no part in the dangers of the strife, levied money to pay themselves salaries; and issued the most absurd orders to the Guerrilla chiefs to march here and march there, without the slightest attention to circumstances or the localities of the country.

It was not likely that men who had sacrificed their all in defence of their liberty, should long suffer such a ridiculous tyranny; and consequently General Teran, with the approbation of Guerrero, marched on the town of Chilpanzingo, where he entered the chamber of its Congress, and said, "Gentlemen, you are a set of asses and plunderers, living on contributions you have no right to levy. Begone, the chiefs of the patriot troops dissolve you."

This action, which alone saved the cause of freedom in the south, was urged as a crime against Teran, when in 1825 he was nominated ambassador to England; and he lost the appointment.

In the northern provinces, the supreme military command was in the hands of Padre Torres, who had behaved so ill to General Mina in 1817. This man was so ignorant and so cruel, that at last his own followers put him to death.

Despotism was now fast resuming its ancient sway; and the Spaniards saw clearly, that if Guerrero could once be effectually overcome, they had nothing more to fear. To effect this desirable object, they sent Colonel Iturbide with about four thousand of their best troops, and he marched along the Acapulco road as far as Chilpanzingo.

Guerrero, who hovered about the mountains on his right flank, sent him the following message:—"You, who are a Creole by birth, may become the greatest man in the country by joining the patriots; and now you are but the slave of your employers."

These two chiefs had a conference at Iguala; and Iturbide seized a convoy of 400,000 dollars, which he declared to be Spanish property, and therefore confiscated. The cry of "Iguala" was raised; and the united corps marched towards the city of Mexico.

Iturbide was an universal favourite with the soldiers, for he was handsome and brave, affable, expensive, and generous. They declared him commander-in-chief, and high admiral of the Republic. Yes, the last was one of his titles; although the patriots had then neither ports or shipping.

Nigreti, Michelena, Felisola, and many others in the service of Spain, now thought proper to declare for independence; there was a general

movement towards the metropolis, and the Spanish authorities, abandoned by all, were obliged to capitulate.

At this crisis, General O'Donahieu, a new vice-roy, arrived from Europe; and found the whole of the Mexican territories, except Vera Cruz and the Castle of San Juan de Ulöa, in the hands of the patriots. He advanced into the interior as far as Cordova, and there held a conference with the insurgent chiefs; when finding he had neither the power to enforce, or the hope of conciliating the people into submission, he made what any but Spanish rulers would have hailed as an advantageous treaty, considering the difficulties of his situation.

It was agreed, that Mexico should be independent, and governed by its own laws; but that its throne should be occupied by that individual of the royal family of Spain who chose to come and reside in the country itself. Thus ended Spanish rule in Mexico, after an uninterrupted dominion of nearly three hundred years.

A national Congress, consisting of about a hundred members, was now assembled; and they thanked and praised Iturbide, flattering him as their liberator, their protector, but granting him no supplies, raising no taxes. In truth, they knew not where to lay their hands on any money, except perhaps their own; and patriotism extends not to the pocket.

The general-in-chief soon found no government could exist without a revenue, and began to get impatient. He expostulated and threatened. Quarrels and misunderstandings arose, and the rupture between the executive and legislative bodies increased daily; until one fine afternoon General Cortazar entered the Chamber of Deputies, and in a concise speech told the members, that the commander-in-chief desired them to go about their business, as a set of dunces and rogues; and he had some troops at the door who would instantly turn them out if they did not go away quietly.

"God bless me," cried the president, "will you put your signature, general, to so violent an act?"

"Certainly," replied the patriot, "I will put my name to any thing you choose."

Accordingly a vote was passed and entered on the journals—"That whereas an armed force had come and dissolved the meeting by violence, the members yielded—but protested." "It is all quite right," said Cortazar, on reading the statement; and putting his signature as commanding the said armed force, saw the chambers vacated, locked the door, and went away.

Next day a proclamation appeared from Iturbide, in which he told the magnanimous Mexicans—"I have long seen with disgust the selfish and unprincipled conduct of the unworthy deputies to

Congress; who, though they took good care to secure handsome salaries to themselves for doing nothing, have pertinaciously objected to provide for the daily pittance of the brave soldiers. Under such circumstances I have dissolved them, and shall immediately convoke another Congress, more worthy to represent so great a nation."

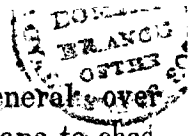
Accordingly he picked out about forty individuals, the collective wisdom of the Republic; that is to say, the majority his own partisans, and some few men of influence, who he thought might be frightened into obedience. This assembly thanked the general-in-chief for his fatherly care of their liberties; but, like the former one, would not be persuaded to grant sufficient supplies. Iturbide became furious, imprisoned some of the most refractory, dismissed others; and one night a serjeant went to the palace and cried out, "Long live Augustine the First, Emperor of the Mexicans!" A mob joined the shout, and insisted on the inhabitants illuminating the windows; while Iturbide played off the usual farce of refusing to accept so elevated a station. But the following morning he published a manifesto, stating that, "as it was the duty of every good citizen to obey the call of the nation, he was willing to sacrifice his own personal feelings and undertake the arduous situation imposed on him." He was crowned by the Bishop of Puebla, a man of talent and a Creole; I believe a solitary instance of such an

extraordinary departure from the Spanish system. The new emperor assembled another Congress; and one of its first acts did the members great honour, for they petitioned the release of those deputies who had been thrown into prison. Augustine the First did not think it prudent to refuse, and therefore set them free.

Victoria, who has the merit of never having committed a cruel act, or of once deviating from his declarations of republican freedom, openly declared the elevation of Iturbide to be an usurpation, and was of course laid hold of. Guerrero, when he found what turn matters were taking, prudently quitted the capital and retired to his mountains and his sambos.

Mexico, in spite of its far-famed mines, is in reality a very poor country, and the emperor could get no money for the expenses of his government and the extravagant entertainments he gave to the people; he therefore raised forced loans, seized a large convoy of private property, and committed some other violent acts. Murmurs and discontent became general among those who had any thing to lose, or who were not permitted to share in the plunder. Victoria escaped, and took refuge near Vera Cruz, where he entered into a correspondence with the governor, San Ana; and gaining him over, they hoisted what is called the flag of liberty on the walls of that city.

Echavale, a Spaniard, and the favourite of Itur-



bide, who had made him captain-general over several provinces, advanced from Xalapa to chastise the rebels; but on receiving a message which pointed out the disgrace of those who had driven out the Spaniards submitting to the sway of one of their own number, a mere colonel in the Spanish service—that a republican form of government, which would make them all equal and all free, was alone to be desired by brave men—he also, after a very praise-worthy balance of his own interests, joined the standard of liberty.

The emperor, exasperated at being betrayed by his friend, determined to destroy the coalition effectually; but his plans were disarranged, by hearing that Guerrero had revolted in the south, Nigreti in the north, and that he could not depend on the Marquis Vivancour at Puebla.

In the mean time, Guadalupe Victoria advanced on the metropolis with 7000 men; Iturbide marched out a few leagues to meet him with 5000 soldiers, and halted at Chalco; when he, who undoubtedly possessed great personal bravery, seems to have been wanting in that moral courage which would have established his throne. He retreated to the city and began to negotiate; when had he given them battle, the patriot leaders do not scruple to affirm their own defeat was certain. His troops were tolerably disciplined, and much attached to him; theirs were either new levies, or half inclined to join the emperor.

Iturbide agreed to receive a pension of 25,000 dollars, and retire to Italy; and his opponents, well knowing the strength of his party, lost not a moment in escorting him to the coast and embarking him for Europe.

His faithful soldiers were ordered out to some little distance from the town, as if to a review; when the Marquis Vivancour began to harangue them, after having first piled their arms, from the considerate motive of not inflicting unnecessary fatigue. This officer being a sensible man, and seeing evident signs of impatience and tumult, wisely held his tongue, but took possession of their arms and retired.

A supreme council was now nominated, consisting of Victoria, Bravo, one or two ecclesiastics, and others; which was to carry on the executive, till Congress could frame a constitution on the model of that of the United States. And the arrival of an envoy from England to inquire into the political state of the country, gave some solidity and much hope to the rising Republic.

Thus matters continued for some time, until General Lobato, who like Guerrero has much more of the Indian than the Creole blood in his veins, went in front of the palace and beat a drum. The guard turned out: "Fellow-soldiers," began the general, "it is impossible we can be free as long as Gachupines* are allowed

* A Mexican term of reproach for Spaniards.

to continue the greatest landholders, the richest merchants, and the most wealthy individuals amongst us. We must drive all Spaniards from the Republic."

"You are right," shouted the soldiers, "get rid of them by all means." And they took up their accoutrements, beat a march, and followed the general.

Victoria was absent from the capital; and Señor Aleman, the minister, who is not accused of ever having acted with energy on any public occasions, but is strongly suspected of having been persuaded by the French to clog the wheels of the new republican government—Señor Aleman heard the noise, inquired into its cause, and with dismay found himself and clerks left unprotected in the palace.

He rushed breathless to the spot, where the Congress were smoking cigars and deliberating on a constitution. "Oh, what shall I do? what shall I do?" whimpered Señor Aleman. "Do!" roared several deputies; "you should have done what your duty required, and not have come here to ask advice."

The British envoy, who no doubt acted according to the dictates of humanity, and agreeably to his instructions, but whose decision I am of opinion will prove fatal to the present order of things in Mexico,* sent to Lobato to state, that as his go-

* The Spaniards are almost the only persons in the Republic

vernment would never connive at so unjust a proscription as the one contemplated; he must instantly demand his passports, if the general persisted in effecting his resolution."

Lobato, who seems to have possessed as much good sense as energy, replied, "That if the minister of so powerful a nation as Great Britain, the only one in Europe which showed inclination to protect the independence of the Mexicans, was resolved to take so determined a part in favour of the Spanish residents, he should abandon his hostility against them."

Accordingly he went to the Congress, demanded amnesty and oblivion for himself and followers, which was most readily granted; the soldiers retook possession of their guard-room; Señor Aleman returned to the palace; and every thing proceeded as before.

While these occurrences were taking place, Iturbide, who had in Europe recovered his self-possession and ambition, but by no means the discretion necessary for such an undertaking, landed in disguise at a small port north of Tampico, with one companion; and being almost immediately recognised and seized by a personal enemy, was

who possess talent, education, or wealth; and as if *that* was not enough to make them obnoxious to the rest of the community, they place themselves at the head of every conspiracy, in order to invite more effectually the vengeance of the mob.

executed with such haste as almost to take away the very semblance of impartial justice.

Had he penetrated into the interior, and more particularly to the important state of Guadalaxara, he would have been emperor at this very day; and I will frankly avow, that with him perished in my opinion all rational probability of the Mexicans speedily becoming either a happy or a respectable nation. Those very pretty ideas so continually put forth about "free and liberal" institutions, must appear contemptible drivelling to all those who have had an opportunity of seeing and judging for themselves, as to their practical effects in Spanish America; or indeed in any country which has violently shaken off an iron despotism, merely to adopt a state of anarchy.

Had Iturbide, or any similar man with popularity and energy enough to make himself obeyed, been permitted to rule over the Mexicans with the show only of liberty and a constitution, the people would gradually have qualified themselves for better things, and become by degrees sensible of the real advantages of possessing a responsible government.

The constitution was now promulgated. A Federative Republic similar to the United States; a new president to be elected every four years; all titles and distinctions of birth to be abolished; and many other articles. Victoria was declared president, with extraordinary powers, as long as

the war continued with Spain; and Bravo was nominated vice-president.

The government was in a lamentable state of poverty; the mines ruined, abandoned, and far beyond the means of impoverished owners to drain them. Agriculture and industry had never in the best of times been the propensities of the Mexicans; nothing flourished but gaming, cock-fighting, and intriguing.

Fortunately, a loan was negotiated with some British capitalists; English companies were formed to take and work the mines, on condition of dividing the profits with the proprietors; and by bringing large sums of money into the country, they assisted the revenue, and employed the shivering and starving population.

Yes, shivering, though within the torrid zone; for the inhabitants are mostly scattered over that mountainous district of broad valleys and abrupt ridges, which Baron Humboldt is pleased to call *table land;* and no person who has not resided there, can form a conception of the sudden and violent changes of temperature those regions are subject to.

Notwithstanding these various *helps,* the expenditure very far exceeded the receipts. The treasury on one occasion had actually been ten days without a dollar. The state of Guadalaxara had seized the port duties of San Blas, which, according to the constitution, belonged to the

Federal government. The state of Yucatan declared, it could not and would not give up its trade with the Island of Cuba. Texas and some other states said it was quite impossible for them to pay their contingents.

News arrived that a vessel from England, containing a gentleman with the ratification of the loan, was off the coast; and the executive sent to one of the most respectable European merchants, begging an advance in cash on this intelligence. He, after proper inquiries into the truth of the report, sent 20,000 dollars to the treasury; other merchants furnished 30,000 more; and with these sums, an expedition under Bravo was organized, which brought the state of Guadalaxara to reason. Since then, there has been a continual repetition of petty conspiracies, pecuniary difficulties, and quarrels between the different members of the Federation; but nothing which has seriously threatened the flimsy political fabric with entire annihilation.

It was the opinion of all foreigners with whom I conversed in the country itself, except three or four young gentlemen in counting-houses, that a thousand well-disciplined and obedient soldiers with a *full* military chest, would speedily render themselves masters of the Republic of Mexico, if they could once get safely past the sickly tracts on the coast. Indeed an eminent patriot among the natives, candidly acknowledged that the money

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without the troops would be quite sufficient for the purpose, as he would undertake to persuade his countrymen to receive king Ferdinand or king Beelzebub as a ruler, provided the pill was properly gilded.

CHAP. VIII.

POLITICAL PARTIES, GOVERNMENT, TRADE, AND MANUFACTURES.

HAVING now given my readers a tolerably clear insight into the details of the Revolutionary War, I shall proceed to remark on the moral and physical strength of parties existing in the Republic.

I had not long resided in Mexico, before I discovered that those among its inhabitants who had the slightest pretension to education or worldly advantages, were split into numerous factions; for as individuals rarely took the trouble to conceal their sentiments if questioned, it was perhaps easier to form a judgment of public opinion there, than on any other spot on the face of the globe.

"Behold," exclaimed I to a sensible acquaintance, "the blessed effects of civil liberty: here no man fears to speak out boldly; and the government is so extremely mild, that although it may punish actions, it scorns to take notice of words only."

"Softly," replied he; "that this government is indeed mild, is perfectly true; but then it is so devoid of energy likewise, as neither to be obeyed

by its subjects or respected by foreigners. The Federation is even now tottering to its fall. The treasury is without a dollar; the deficiencies for the present year are seven millions of dollars, and more than one state has declared the intention of not paying the contribution as fixed by the laws of the Republic: but I mentioned explicitly to one of the cleverest ministers England ever produced, that the present order of things in Mexico would not last; when he told me, in the politest manner imaginable, that he could not possibly believe me."

As I had generally found this gentleman's information relative to the country I was then in to be correct, I took additional interest in making inquiries and observations; and the more I investigated the subject, the more thoroughly convinced I became of the inefficiency of the constitution to the existing state of the Mexicans; and the more completely satisfied, that "free and liberal" institutions, however good in themselves, might *practically* become a curse instead of a blessing, when adopted by a people not ready to receive them.

In the city of Mexico, all political parties are comprehended under the two *noms de guerre*, '*Escoseses*' and '*Yorkinos*,' so called after two masonic lodges lately established in the Republic; but I think it more satisfactory to particularize some of the minor divisions into which the good people are so happily splitting.

All those who were noble, or from their wealth and influence had hoped to become so, are excessively angry at the law which abolishes titles; and to these are joined the Spaniards by birth, who still cling fondly to a monarchical government; the Bishop of Puebla, and several other Creoles of talent, who declare their countrymen are not yet in a state to govern themselves, but require a master.

The Republicans form two factions, extremely bitter against each other; those who wish to have an undivided—and, as they are pleased to say —powerful Republic, under one sole executive and legislative body; and they who desire to continue a Federation, each separate state being ruled by its own laws, with all the rights of independent sovereignty.

Then the manufacturing town of Queretaro, which contains about 40,000 inhabitants, has pretensions to become the seat of the general government, because its situation is more central than that of Mexico city. Again, the small towns of Toluca and Tulancingo each insisted on the provincial Congress holding its meetings within their limits, because Mexico was the federal metropolis; but after much animosity, that important affair was settled in favour of the ancient Tezcuco.

Some able political economists proposed that each state should have a separate coinage, and actually decreed that each one should have distinct

additional import duties; other free and liberal persons insisted upon laws equally absurd; in short, nothing can be more ridiculous to the European, than what he sees and hears passing around him daily in the territories of the new Republic.

General Guerrero is at the head of a very different class of men. All the Indians and Sambos and darker races of the Creoles, comprising at least eight-tenths of the nation; consider him as one of themselves, and look up to him as their idol.

This chief, when the government became tolerably settled, presented a memorial to the Congress, containing lists of individuals he had been obliged to deprive of their property during the war of independence; stating the value taken, and demanding that the Federation at large should be called upon to compensate the sufferers.

The Congress received his petition with contempt, affirmed it to be a barefaced endeavour to pocket half a million of dollars himself; and "that they knew of no war, and of no patriots previous to the 'Cry of Iguala,' all before then being the insurrection and mutinies of the '*Gentes irracionales*'—Indians."

Guerrero was not the man to be silent: he swore "they were an infamous set of pickpockets and scoundrels; that if they did not take care, he would call his friends around him, and hang some twenty lawyers and priests; fellows who dared to call Victoria, himself, and others, by whom

Spanish oppression had always been resisted while they crouched to the lash, insurgents and mutineers."

Thus the matter rested when I quitted the country in March, 1827. Guerrero threatened openly, but did nothing; and his antagonists did not wish to push him to extremities, because they know him capable of fulfilling his words; a point on which I most fully agree.

I have travelled a good deal over that very mountainous district near the Pacific, which was more peculiarly the theatre of Guerrero's military achievements; and I found every individual enthusiastic in his praise. On one occasion, at the town of Huetamo, where I gladly took the advice of dismissing some soldiers who had accompanied me, as I had found it difficult to buy provisions for themselves and horses; among other arguments used by my worthy host and the alcalde, was—"You see there are no '*Gentes irracionales*' about here; do what you like, say what you like, go where you like, always remembering to praise Guerrero and to curse the Spaniards."

The family of Fagoaga, from its wealth, intellectual acquirements, and acquaintance with European manners, must for a long time take the lead among what I may fairly term the aristocratical part of the Mexican community; but they push forward Bravo as their ostensible chief; the ge-

nerous Bravo, who revenged his father's murder by giving his prisoners liberty. He is described as a well-intentioned man, but needy, and too irresolute to rule the storm when raised; but his popularity on account of long and successful exertions in the cause of liberty, gives him some little influence even with the partisans of Guerrero.

It is probable, that the struggle to elect the president of the Republic, which comes on, I think, November of this year (1828), will, in its consequences, decide the stability of the Mexican constitution; and afford means of predicting the future line of conduct most likely to be pursued by the rulers of the country—the arbiters of its "free and liberal" institutions.

The executive government has now been lodged in the hands of Victoria Guadalupe for more than three years, with additional powers of so extensive a nature during the war with Spain, that he has been placed nearly in the situation of a dictator; and it would be unjust not to state, that he has conducted himself with so much leniency, and regard for the constitutional principles, as to prove himself worthy of the high trust confided to him.

Amiable as his motives must have been, I am inclined to think he has often carried his clemency and adherence to legal forms, further than was warranted either by sound discretion or sound humanity; for in all popular commotions, or secret

conspiracies, the prompt punishment of a guilty individual may spare the future shedding of much blood.

Thus when a priest was arrested, known to be an active instigator of rebellion; known to have been the fomenter of a quarrel among the soldiers quartered in Mexico, in which some lives were lost, and nothing but the cowardice of both parties saved the city from pillage and massacre; the prisoner was allowed, for many months, to avail himself of every legal quibble which could be invented or thought of.

Had this priest been hanged instantly in front of the cathedral, it would have awed the factious, crushed the hopes of a powerful party, and saved the Federation from various other machinations and difficulties. But I positively know, that when this proceeding was recommended to Victoria; he replied—"I am the first president of this Republic, and I will not be the first to throw contempt on its laws, however deserving they may be of repeal; the prisoner shall be permitted to make use of all his privileges, and of every legal objection, but when once condemned, I will order him to execution should it be the last hour of my authority."

In the streets of the metropolis, and other towns, are seen criminals working in chains, many of whom have been convicted of various murders and atrocities. This fate is undoubtedly worse

than death itself; but I am not sure whether in the present state of society in the Republic, the sight of a public execution now and then, by the old Spanish mode of strangulation, would not have a good effect. It could not possibly make the people more depraved, and it might terrify them into becoming better.

It must be acknowledged by every impartial observer, that Victoria has by no means had an easy part to play in his exalted station; for the Federation is burthened with an army out of all proportion to its wants, and with a half-pay list which makes most others sink into insignificance: indeed it has been sometimes suspected, that the late quarrel with Texas was joyfully hailed as an opportunity of getting rid of some of this "*dead weight*," by the comfortable fevers of the coast; for the monied Mexicans argue like other people, "even if the individuals composing the '*dead weight*' once were useful, it is quite certain they are now extremely inconvenient creditors."

The soldiers, however, did not much approve of the measure, and deserted so fast, that very few arrived in Vera Cruz. They are almost all clothed and accoutred with articles from Great Britain, and cut a much better appearance than I had expected; far superior to the officers, who are sometimes decked out more like tragic heroes than men disciplined to uniformity.

As light cavalry, I think the Mexicans might

easily become equal to any European troops; and if only permitted to scratch, spit, and smoke their cigar on parade, I do not imagine there would be much difficulty in the drill. On the several occasions I have had dragoons with me, I have been much pleased with their good conduct, their contentment under unavoidable privations, and their thankfulness on receiving a reward; only once was I annoyed, when telling three men that I had given eight dollars to their officer who rode over the ridge with me, and he was to present each of them with one, by their shaking their heads, and saying, "You may have so desired, but we shall never get it."

The navy of Mexico is contemptible; it is hated as an useless source of expense, is neglected shamefully, I might almost say abandoned.

Commodore Porter, who is at the head of the department, resides at Vera Cruz, and does every thing he can to place the vessels on a respectable footing; but what can be done with effect, when Indians, or other poor devils, are driven down to the coast and called sailors; they die by thirty and forty a day when the fever once breaks out, and let me ask when *is* the season of the year it does not break out? and fresh droves of new victims arrive.

The commodore had, at the end of 1826, a very fine American-built frigate, in excellent order, and some few vessels of a smaller description:

when he could obtain any money, he was enabled to engage American seamen, and then he could put to sea and destroy the Spanish trade with Cuba.

There is one fact relative to the Mexican government which does it infinite honour, and may be put somewhat in comparison with the noble act of the British royal family, who supplied the yearly wants of the Pretender's descendants. The widows of Iturrugaray, O'Donahieu, and Iturbide himself, are in the receipt of annual pensions from the Federation.

But the CONGRESS; what can be said in praise of the Mexican Congress? This sapient assembly, anxious to legislate on every subject, and not knowing how to well regulate any one, has committed, and continues to commit daily, in defiance of half a dozen sensible members, the most laughable blunders imaginable. Its first act was to copy, most servilely, the Anglo-American constitution in all its enactments, except one, and that one a very prudent, and often necessary precaution against open violence; it abjured the right of re-electing the president of the Republic to his office, until four years had elapsed between the periods of his authority.

I do the wisdom of the Mexicans great injustice; they further enacted, that the clergy, and the military, were exempted from the jurisdiction of the ordinary tribunals in all capital offences; and

were to be tried by those of their own body politic only.

The Congress of Mexico may be accused of having taken for its model some other congresses once held in the mother country; for the members not unfrequently make long and excellent speeches, but do very little, and what little they really do, had far better be undone: thus, although very nearly all the resources it has to depend upon are the duties on imported goods; the members composing it have, with a few exceptions, shown the utmost anxiety to encourage the contraband trade.

Previous to the revolution, smuggling with the British West India Islands was a most profitable and constant speculation to both parties; and I have heard in Jamaica, the freedom of Mexico execrated, as the ruin of many an honest man's fortune: but now the Anglo-Americans carry on the business, to the almost total exclusion of competitors.

Such is the well-known venality of Mexican custom-house officers, that to doubt it, or attempt to unload your goods without a bribe in your hand, would be as ridiculous as to visit a great man in India without a present; but I am myself far from doubting a corruption, which I know pervades the civil, judicial, and every other department of the Republic.

I could relate innumerable instances of open connivance at a contraband trade, many of which

have occurred under my own observation; but I shall only give the following statement of an American captain with whom I sailed from Alvarado: "The duties on my cargo amounted to 15,000 dollars, and some articles were prohibited; I went to the commandant, and laid 1000 dollars on the bed where he was smoking, next to the chief custom-house officer, to whom I gave 500 dollars, and, lastly, divided another 500 among the soldiers on duty; and my goods were all landed, to my pretty considerable satisfaction."

It was not pretended that the legislature was ignorant of what was going on, far from it; but the affair was most satisfactorily settled by the two following questions: "Can you find an honester set of men in these territories to fill the situation? Is it not better that our adherents should gain a livelihood, than those of our opponents?"

I am willing to admit, that the ground taken for justification was a strong one; but this was not the only evil in the system: the tariff was ill adjusted; for the absurd prohibition of some articles, and the faulty classification of others, proved, beyond all question, that self-interest was the only consideration that influenced these patriotic ministers.

At Tampico I heard that flour was there selling at eighteen dollars the barrel, while American speculators offered to import it, from New Orleans, at three dollars the barrel; but the prohibition was absolute. Now was not this almost making

it the duty of an ill fed population to evade the laws?

When the introduction of leather was strictly forbidden, one of the shrewdest members expressed satisfaction at the measure; only he thought it would be better to except such articles as they did not themselves manufacture, and from which a revenue might be derived; gloves, for instance: "No exceptions," cried the majority; "we make leather, and can, if we like, make gloves too; and if we do not do it, it is only because we despise the trouble."

Another time, an American vessel came to Vera Cruz, between the cargo of which, to prevent rubbing, was thrust some wheaten straw; an inhabitant who saw the refuse thrown overboard, thought it an excellent opportunity to get provender for his horses, as forage on the coast is enormously dear, and he asked to be allowed to take away the straw in his boat, which was readily granted. A report spread of the fact, and was carried to Mexico: "What!" exclaimed the indignant legislators, "shall it be said that this vast and powerful Republic wants straw? The heavens and Our Lady forbid!" and a courier was immediately sent down to Vera Cruz, with the order to insert straw among the prohibited articles. In the same spirit, onions, garlick, macaroni, vegetables, and even manure, have been forbidden.

At one period, goods were not only subjected

to the import duty; but at Xalapa they were taxed for the state of Vera Cruz; at Puebla, for the state of the same name; and at Mexico, both for the city and the state: an Englishman assured me, these various duties amounted to 56 per cent.; but I understood a consolidation had since taken place of the five interests concerned between the port and the capital, and the total amount levied was reduced to 33½ per cent.

The *ad valorem* system opened a luxuriant field for peculation, and gave rise to such contrarieties, that it would puzzle the longest-headed political economist to find out on what principle the business was conducted; unless indeed he admitted that "principle" had nothing to do with the case.

Another highly-amusing characteristic of the Mexican Congress, in which, however, it most truly represents the nation, is the puerile vanity it displays on every possible occasion; totally forgetting the real weakness of the Republic, its want of union, and the excessive scantiness of a population which is spread over so vast a surface.

When the French claim to be the first soldiers and best cooks, the cleverest peruquiers and ablest statesmen, the politest dancing-masters and wisest legislators, it raises a smile; but then the French really have carried their victorious arms from one end of Europe to the other; and by adapting themselves to the habits of different people, have generally made themselves beloved. What, how-

ever can be said for the pitiful Mexicans, who constantly publish in their speeches such phrases as this: "We are wise as the Greeks, and brave as those of Rome?"

It is a favourite topic of conversation with those few who can talk on any other subjects than mining and gaming, to draw a comparison between themselves and the Anglo-Americans; and they have at length pretty generally admitted the *fact*, that the United States are the second most powerful Republic on the American continent.

To those who have witnessed their jealousy of a few Europeans, united on the high land in the prosecution of mining speculations; who have listened to their plaintive fears of the people of the United States seizing all that immense tract of country beyond the *Rio del Norte*; or of the French fleet landing a battalion at Vera Cruz, which would march and sack the capital; to individuals who have heard all this, the above gasconades are really too contemptible to be amusing. Whenever any of these self-satisfied gentry began to speak of the institutions, the progress, the power and commercial importance of the Anglo-Americans, in such a strain as to induce the belief not only that the Mexicans enjoyed the same and greater advantages, but had actually conferred them on their northern neighbours; no men could be more keenly alive to the absurdity, than two or three well-informed American citizens with whom

I was intimate. Never did I hear those liberal-minded gentlemen speak one word against England, but they were angry enough at the Mexican pretensions to equality. "Did we ever complain," said they, "that the mother country purposely kept us in a state of ignorance and debasement? Far otherwise; we only thought that a government at home would increase the benefits we already enjoyed; and, like a well-nourished plant which is a little twisted by an unnatural position, we had no sooner cut the bandages which confined us, than we sprung to the erect posture of the parent state. Now that the animosities engendered by the revolutionary struggle are fast dying away, we shall acknowledge ourselves proud of our origin, and we think Britain will not have cause to be ashamed of her offspring; but as to these Mexicans, it is impossible to give them more than the negative praise, that perhaps their ignorance and wretchedness does not exceed what is observed in Spain herself."

No one thing tended so much to inflate the vanity of the Mexican citizens, as the eagerness with which the British public rushed towards the newly-found "land of promise," with goods in one hand, money in the other; and the anxious desire displayed, to secure a treaty of alliance and amity with their young Republic.

"If you did not stand in need of our assistance, to rescue your falling commerce and ruined manu-

factures from annihilation," is a peculiarly popular phrase, and had just sufficient foundation in fact, to be received as an unanswerable truism; so that while the English offered a treaty which they thought could alone bestow some stability on the emancipated nation, and protect it from aggression and final subjugation, the Mexican Congress debated that important document, article by article, exactly as a pedlar bargains for his purchase. It was the good sense of Victoria and a few others alone, backed by a somewhat contemptuous and impatient message, supposed to have been transmitted by the British cabinet, which induced the "collective wisdom" of the Mexican Republic to ratify and sign the contract. I was told, that one of the most influential of the deputies had serious thoughts of immortalizing the legislative reputation of the Mexican nation, by proposing to procure an importation of as many English young ladies as could be led astray from the purlieus of Covent Garden; in order that, by marrying them to the nobles and higher classes, a finer race of citizens might be insured to posterity.

This patriotic measure was defeated by the violent conduct of an Englishwoman, who had for some time been considered the leader of the "ton" and setter of fashions at Mexico; she was found out to be of a fie-fie description; that was nothing—but she was known to make frequent and

heavy use of her fists. This last circumstance had weight; the whole scheme was abandoned, as the Mexican gentry were alarmed at the idea of being beaten.

In regard to the INTERNAL TRADE of the new Federation, my information must necessarily be brief. There are no roads, never can be canals, and, as every thing is conveyed on the backs of mules, at heavy freight charges, articles of intrinsic value, or of the first necessity, are the only merchandise conveyed from one part of the republican territories to another.

I do not recollect the charge demanded for freight of each mule from the capital to Vera Cruz, a distance of two hundred and sixty-four miles, to have been, at any time, below sixteen or above sixty dollars; but there have been occasions when no temptation would induce the muleteers to go down to the coast at all; one mule's freight may be calculated at three hundred pounds weight; for though it is true they will carry four hundred pounds each, yet the difficulties of hiring, and delays on the road from sore backs, or other accidents, are then so much increased, that more is lost in time than gained in bulk.

The government has also the right of pressing all mules into its service on particular occasions; which is assigned as the reason why the Indians and poorer inhabitants of the upper country al-

most invariably employ asses in their little traffic; but I should think, in this case, poverty was a far more probable cause.

The imports from Europe consist of almost every article which speculative ingenuity can devise; and the only remark I shall here make on the subject is, that the Germans were said to surpass the British in linens; and to undersell them also in cotton stockings, which I can scarcely credit.

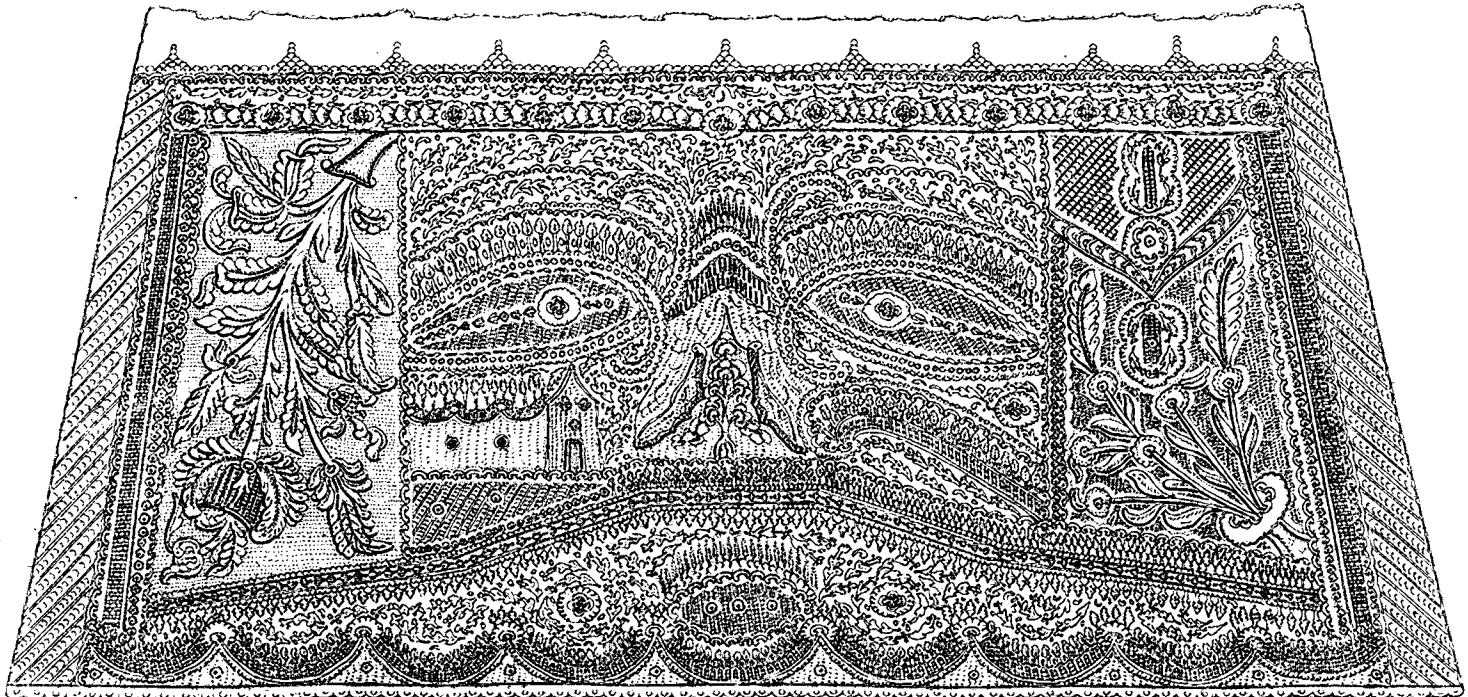
The productions of the country I have been most in the habit of observing laden upon the mules, were wheat, Indian corn, cotton, indigo, sugar, choppedstraw for hay, barley, pulque, and common earthenware; the precious metals, vanilla, cochineal, tobacco, chocolate, and I believe coffee, are of course freighted from those particular spots where they are found; but I fancy there was rather a scarcity of them while I was a resident in the Republic.

Of the MANUFACTURES, next to the all-absorbing one of amalgamation for silver, I should place the singular beverage called pulque, by which more fortunes have been realized than by the mines, because the risk is none, the expense trifling, the profit certain. The plant from which this liquor is obtained I shall describe in another chapter: and the process is merely the effect of a heated atmosphere on vegetable juice.

The city of Puebla has long been noted for its

common earthenware and coarse glass bottles; that of Guadalaxara for its leather botas or leggings; the town of Queretaro has some large establishments for making the serapes, a sort of blanket cloak universally worn, and formed of cotton or wool, or sometimes both. The bota is formed of the skin of a deer, well tanned and soft; and being then stamped with a variety of pleasing figures, is bound round the leg with a coloured garter below the knee: on horseback it gives the rider a firmer hold than the English top-boot, because being flexible, it accommodates itself to every motion of the animal. I have never seen the mode of manufacturing the embossed work on the bota, but I believe the figures are cut out of a block of wood with a knife; and the skin being thoroughly soaked, is then stretched over the wooden block, and beaten with mallets till the impression of the figures becomes indelible.

Good hats are manufactured of the fine hair of a brown goat, said to be common in the northern districts; but I never was fortunate enough to see the animal. Tobacco is, I believe, still a monopoly in the hands of government. Indigo is obtained in the hot country from the sediment of a small osier-looking plant, when steeped in water fourteen hours; the stench is sickening and unhealthy, but the cakes are dried, and the whole process finished in a day and night.



THE BOTA.

J. Whiting sc.

London, Published by Carpenter & Son, Old Bond. Street, March 20th 1828.

Near Jorullo Volcan, the quality of the indigo is said to be excellent, each acre of plant yields from 100 to 120 lbs., and the roots will shoot up branches for a second year's crop, but of an inferior description; the price of conveyance to Mexico city, is one dollar each twenty-five pounds, and it fetches in that market from two to three dollars per pound. Of the comparative cheapness or value of the article, I of course know nothing; and merely give the dëtails as coming from a spot hitherto not much visited.

Sugar factories are common in the warm country; as each grower seems to refine his own, or else freights it to the towns in small brown lumps of a quarter or half a pound, wrapped up in a maize leaf. Brandy of a very strong fiery nature, is prepared from maize (Indian corn), and also from sugar, if my information was correct, but it is quite free from the rum flavour.

All those manufactures of the Indians which existed at the conquest, appear now to be forgotten; and it surprises an European how few articles of national invention he can purchase, while Dutch and other toys are common. At Patzquaro, I in vain inquired for specimens of the japan work in which the Tariscan Indians are reported to have been expert; in other places I procured some figures in wax and also in silver, with a few twig baskets.

The most curious specimens of ingenuity I could ever meet with, are rag figures stuffed with wax, and made by two old nuns at Puebla; they are eagerly bought up by Europeans, on account of their faithful delineation of the national features and dress.

CHAP. IX.

SOCIETY, AND INFLUENCE OF THE WOMEN.

THERE cannot be said to exist in the Republic of Mexico, any thing which bears the slightest resemblance to what we understand by the term good society; which is chiefly, if not entirely, attributable to the circumstance of the softer sex never having been permitted to exercise the slightest influence over the men, beyond that which the mere gross and instinctive impulses of nature may occasionally give rise to.

At first I was inclined to believe, that this unnatural and lamentable order of things must be purely owing to the long struggle for independence and civil liberty; but on questioning some persons who had moved in the first circles, both before and during the revolution, they acknowledged that sociability and gaiety had never been the vogue in their country, except during the short reign of Iturbide, whose extravagance was unbounded: and from the failure experienced by an amiable English lady, in her endeavours to collect around her a weekly party of the most respectable inhabitants, I am induced to give full credit to the assertions of my informants.

The men, with very few exceptions, are totally destitute of education. Their want of common information, and ignorance of geography in particular, was invariably displayed if they could be induced to converse on any of those subjects usually considered interesting to gentlemen; but they also have that convenient habit, so often adopted in Britain, of gaining a reputation for wisdom by holding their tongue.

The Mexicans had heard of France, England, Holland, etcetera, as dependencies which sometimes rebelled against the paternal government of Spain; and being assisted by the devil, would contrive to prevent the usual supply of wines and quicksilver being sent across the Atlantic. I have been questioned about Blake, and some of our early buccaneers, in a tone which implied fear of their successors renewing the trade; but of our Howes and Nelsons I never heard a word.

Nor will these anecdotes, strange as they are, appear very improbable to those who may have visited other parts of the European continent besides the capitals and large towns.

A book in the hands of a Mexican gentleman, to pass away the weary time, or improve his mind, is a novelty I cannot task my memory with ever having witnessed. They talk very little, often paying visits of several hours, without uttering ten words; a cigar is their inseparable companion and comforter, at all times, and on all occasions;

indeed I learnt at length to hail its presence myself, as the least offensive of a multiplicity of unpleasant odours.

Lawyers smoke while reading a legal document, priests during the pauses of the service; visitors who intrude at your dinner hour, which is very customary out of the capital, quietly draw a chair to the table, and while you eat they puff; and this is seasoned with the most violent and repeated eructations and spittings, neither one nor the other being considered ungenteel, but quite the reverse: your carpets and floors, your furniture and curtains, are indiscriminately covered with saliva, and its disgusting appendages.

The amusements of these intellectual gentlemen consist in cock-fighting, billiards, cards, and gambling of every description; which are passionately followed by all classes of people, to a degree scarcely credible. Gaming at once levels all ranks, all distinctions, a most perfect equality prevails, in knavery as well as excitement; and I have frequently seen a general, or a governor, bet his dollars against a man whose only covering was a blanket full of vermin.

Drunkenness is not at all prevalent among those who call themselves "*Gentes Racionales*;" but the Indians and poorer orders make it a point of religious observance, never to be sober when they can possibly get drunk.

As a nation, the women must be pronounced un-

pardonably plain. I was astonished, after all I had heard and all I had read, not to find above a dozen really handsome ladies, with good figures, in all my excursions; and even they lost most of their attraction, if seen in the mornings, by the habit of being then peculiarly slovenly; for it is impossible to speak of the Mexican ladies, as "when unadorned—adorned the most."

In the city of Mexico there were *six*, and I will not positively assert two more might not have been found, who were lady-like, and agreeable in manners and person: one was remarkable for her soft and pleasing tone of voice, and very much admired by all Europeans for her conversational powers and fascinating style; others had also evidently taken pains to improve their understandings and personal appearance.

Why these bright examples of the sex had not their ideas more delicate and refined, can only be accounted for, by their being thrown among men totally incapable of appreciating such acquirements.

In general, the black eyes of the Mexican women have neither that vivacity or that softness, which different persons have praised in the Spanish females; and they all, but more particularly those of the lower classes, lose their pretensions to beauty at sixteen or seventeen years of age: the few exceptions more fully prove the rule; and this premature old age is very much accelerated by the

custom of wearing neither stays or other support for their bosoms.

I do, by the bye, remember one good-humoured lady, at Valladolid, who had squeezed her bosom up to her chin, and wore her waist between her shoulder blades, as ten years back used to be the fashion at Paris.

All have a great quantity of dark hair; but it is not fine, or in natural ringlets. Indeed that of the lower orders is so coarse, long, and black, that when of an evening I have seen women walking about in great pride, purposely turning round to display fully their straight locks hanging down their back; my imagination has irresistibly reverted to the tails of the Life Guards' horses in London.

Seldom is one lady found paying a visit to another; such things are either unpractised or considered an improper sort of espionage. They go to mass in the morning, to the theatre at night; and the intervals are passed in lolling at home, doing nothing but smoke little white paper cigars as big as a quill, or in a drive to the Alameda.

In the evening the saloon is thrown open to such male acquaintance as choose to call, where the female part of the family are seen sitting in a row against the wall, flirting their fans with a velocity and dexterity of movement which is highly creditable. Working I have seen once, reading never, pianofortes twice, singing to the guitar

I have heard frequently; but as they usually pitch the voice to the highest key, it thrilled through my head like a most abominable octave.

Spitting, smoking, and eructating, are considered just as indispensable accomplishments among the ladies as the gentlemen; and, if a Señorita wishes to show you particular attention, she puts her hand into her bosom, pulls out a number of cigarritos, and entreats your acceptance of one. Even I, who detest tobacco, have been thus forced to make myself sick more than once; for who could reject a cigar from such a place?

The ceremonies on taking leave after a visit, are delightfully complicated. You advance close to the ladies and bow, they must not move from their seat; if very polite, you endeavour to gain the door without turning your back, but at all events you there pause and bow; the master of the house accompanies you out, and you bow to each other at the top of the stairs; six steps down, you turn and bow again; on the first landing-place this is repeated, and again at the foot of the staircase, when you observe your friend has taken up your old position. Be sure likewise, if you value your reputation, not to quit the court-yard without turning to see whether your persecutor has still kept you in view. I once gave serious offence by this last omission.

Can it be fairly a matter of much astonishment, when to the above idle listless mode of passing

through life, is added the habit of eating much and often, that intrigues are as common as they are notorious, notwithstanding fricolis, eructations, and hot suppers?

But my readers must not for one moment imagine there exists between the sexes at Mexico any of that tender gallantry, any of those minute attentions, any of that fascination of language and devotion, which in Europe either conceals the crime or renders it less disgusting; there is in reality about as much sentiment between the parties, as between the tenants of an English farm-yard; or as among Fauns and Satyrs,

"When the compulsive ardour gives the charge."

The men have not the slightest respect for the women; and as a natural consequence, the women do not respect themselves. Nothing is more common, than for ladies of the first families to make the most indelicate allusions to the causes of their friends' illness or temporary absence; and it would seem, that in the eyes of a Mexican lady, the common effects of dissolute habits render the victim a more interesting object of admiration.

I once remarked, on the absolutely childish appearance of the wife of a person in high command. "Yes," answered a bystander; "he has been so great a libertine himself, that he knew he other means of forestalling all other admirers, but by marrying out of the nursery."

Neither does this plan always protect the lords of the creation from being deceived; for I heard a young lady describing to an old friend in a party how she had managed to make a fool of her better half. Her sister, one of the finest girls in Mexico, was close by, and talking to me at the time; and as I found it was the fashion to take no sort of notice of a thing so entirely a matter of course, I merely looked round to see if there was any thing peculiar in the worthy husband's appearance.

A medical gentleman residing in a small town I happened to visit, actually made an offer of his wife to an acquaintance of mine, if in return he should be presented with an old coat or pair of boots; "but," continued the narrator, "I thought the offer seemed too common to be complimentary, and was really afraid that the worthy man wished to fix me as a patient."

A gentleman went to condole with one of the best bred and most accomplished women in Mexico, on the death of her youngest child. "Ah, yes, poor dear little creature," replied the really afflicted mother, "it could neither eat or get rid of its food for a whole week, and therefore of course it died."

"Undoubtedly," remarked the comforter, "it could not be helped; and after all, it is a loss so easily repaired."

The lady thanked her visitor for so sensible a remark, and immediately dried her tears.

A lady of title, still well known in Mexico for the remains of uncommon beauty, was in her early life denounced before the Inquisition for having exposed her person to an Italian artist. When she was brought before the tribunal, and understood the nature of the accusation against her, she exclaimed with the most engaging simplicity,—"Dear me, is that all? Why I thought there was no more harm in doing so before a painter than in doing it before your reverences, and of course *that* must be quite innocent." So saying, she exposed her form and limbs so effectually before the holy fathers, that either the *coup-d'œil* or the *coup-de-main* gained her instant dismissal; and she returned home in triumph, telling everybody how cleverly she had managed.

The conjugal fidelity of a lady had long been known to the whole city as non-existing; but when she talked of sending her children to England for education, the priests and holy mother church became alarmed for the good woman's character. The husband was then first informed of his lady's wicked propensities by a gathering of zealous and interested monks; and the poor man was actually forced, much against his own inclination and better judgment, to divorce the mother of his children.

"I cannot think," said one of the belles, at a ball given by the foreigners, and so loud that many besides her partner heard her; "I cannot

think why the gentlemen admire Miss —— so much? Do you know she never washes her teeth; while I am quite uncomfortable if I don't wash mine twice a week, and with a brush too."

An elderly intriguante at the theatre, and wherever she was met, endeavoured to allure admirers to herself, by vaunting to her male acquaintance of the prolonged vigour of her constitution; and by openly descanting in the grossest and most obscene language upon subjects which every female, whether in civilized or in uncivilized life, is anxious to veil under the deepest and most impenetrable mystery; but nobody paid attention to her asseverations, or put their truth to a trial.

The astonishment expressed by an amiable and delicate Englishwoman, at finding some of her female visitors had only disappeared from the ball-room in order to smoke in the balcony, was quite equalled by the gratification of three gentlemen who observed *la bella marquésa* put her leg on a table, and fasten her garter considerably above the knee.

Many may possibly affirm there is no moral sin in most of the above anecdotes; but they prove, I think, beyond a doubt, that either from want of education or their mode of treatment by the men, the sex in the new Republic of Mexico is destitute of the delicacy and of all those feminine qualities which we are accustomed to admire and to respect in England.

To avoid the Indian custom of turning in the toes, the Spanish Creoles often run into the opposite extreme of throwing the heels too much forward; so that I have sometimes found great difficulty to suppress laughter, when a lady has been shuffling across the room, hardly preserving her equilibrium, by the free swinging of her hands and arms.

Let me in fairness state, that even before I quitted the country, a most rapid and pleasing change had taken place among the ladies of the capital. Some few had been married to Europeans; and their female acquaintance quickly observed how much more kindly and delicately they were treated than others who had Mexican husbands. Several of the richest and prettiest loudly declared they would only marry a foreigner; and all were discarding the use of tobacco, and exerting infinitely more taste in dress and personal appearance.

CHAP. X.

PRIESTS AND SUPERSTITION.

These are the true masters of Mexico and its population. Had it not been for a rancorous hatred existing between the regular and secular orders of the priesthood, Spain would still have preserved her authority in this portion of her American dominions. Every thing which a despotic government could do for the advancement of the various fraternities of monks, was done in the most offensive and scandalous manner possible. Spaniards, however low in birth or unfit by education and ability, were almost always preferred to the high dignities and emoluments of the church; and there were but very few instances of Creoles being advanced to superior stations in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. But this very circumstance proved eventually to be the ruin of the whole system, and of the royal authority itself.

Those comfortable gentry, the monks and native Spaniards, did not choose to quit the court and centre of preferment, to settle where they might be forgotten; and, therefore, rarely condescended to accept cures in the northern provinces, or those

other parts of the kingdom where the climate was bad and the profits uncertain; consequently Creoles were of necessity appointed to the parishes, and gained the reverential attachment, as well as every kind of authority among the people.

It was the Hidalgos and Moreloses who first raised the standard of liberty, and fanned the discontent of the inhabitants into a flame. The reverence with which the clergy are still treated throughout the Republic, and the great revenues they derive from the bigotted ignorance of their parishioners, is almost incredible. In the capital and other large towns, the unrestricted intercourse with foreigners is beginning to shake the influence of the worthy fathers; but in the villages and remote districts they are despotic, and can do just as they think proper. None of the Indians or labouring classes would think of keeping their hats on in the presence of the Cura, or venture to approach him without bending the knee, and kissing the hand graciously held out for that purpose; nor do even the higher orders of the community very frequently show a total disregard to the observance of the same marks of deference and respect.

In the summer of 1825, a little ugly image of the Virgin, without a nose, and painted a dark brown colour to please the Indians, was paraded through the streets of Mexico with great pomp, and faith in her stopping the progress of the fever,

Her carriage was driven by a marquis; and though some few did whisper that Our Lady of *Los Remedios* had lost her nose from an illness caught during her last visit by Santiago, yet no one thought of scouting the whole concern and keeping away.

Much about the same time, an American undertook to tame the most vicious horses in a few minutes; and by some means or other, when the animals were led out of his shed they trembled violently, were covered with perspiration, but showed every sign of being gentle and quiet. His success was complete; but it was with the utmost difficulty he was rescued from the fanatical mob, who would have pulled him to pieces as a magician. The populace of Puebla, very properly alive to the true interests of Christianity, began to stone to death some English horses, sent out by the Mexican envoy in order to improve the country breed. The authorities interfered to preserve their countryman's property; and though the horses were most stoutly accused of heresy, a party of soldiers was ordered out to rescue and escort the obnoxious animals beyond danger.

It is by no means certain, however, that troops can always be found willing to execute such sacrilegious commands, as an acquaintance of mine once found out very much to his satisfaction. This excellent man, the Cura of a populous district, is one of those who go about doing good, succouring the widow and the orphan, and frequently even

giving an asylum to the latter in his own house. But it so happened, that the uncharitable world declared all these orphans were females, and pretty; other Curas strongly objected to such a monopoly of goodness; and a chief of some patriots, during the unsettled period of the revolution, sent a few of his men to ransack the parsonage and bring off the booty.

My worthy friend lodged his bevy of proselytes in the church: the soldiers discovered their place of retreat, but decided unanimously, that as the girls were now under the tutelage of saints, it did not become them to interfere in the business; and when I became known to the good man, he had always from four to eight residing under his protection. A young American, who by some means or other got acquainted with one of these houries, was so charmed as actually to offer marriage; which threw the priest into such a paroxysm of rage as almost to have occasioned a serious fracas.

The fees paid to the clergy at marriages, christenings, and burials, are heavy enough in all conscience, but they do not form a tenth part of their lucrative perquisites; for the lower classes of the Mexicans have no other idea of the Roman catholic religion, or of any religion at all, except its ceremonies; but in those they delight, as holidays and excuses for idleness and pulque.

Not a hut or a garden, a pigstie or a footpath, can be used until blessed and ornamented with a

wooden cross. Each separate working in the mines, each heap of stones, and utensil for amalgamation, must be similarly honoured, with the addition of fresh nosegays of wild flowers or green branches every morning.

All these things bring grist to the mill; but far more important and profitable are holy processions in honour of the Virgin or a saint; the gift of a new image to some chapel; the conveyance of one patron saint to pay a friendly visit to a neighbouring one, or to effect some cures which the other had failed to do; for it should be known, that the poor bigots are extremely capricious in their estimation of the different canonized worthies, and have been seen to flog an image most soundly, and then cover its wounds with filth, for not having paid due attention to their prayers.

This gadding about of saints on visits of ceremony or condolence, and carried in a canopied sedan chair by uncovered Indians, is one of the most ridiculous sights imaginable; and so well have their ignorant bearers been tutored by the legendary paintings and stories, that they always take a gentleman saint to keep company with a lady, or *vice versa*.

On one occasion I was determined to see the farce out; and having first humbly inquired, cap in hand and with downcast eyes, where they were going, and ascertained it was one of the many San Antonios on an excursion of pleasure to see Santa

Catalina for a day or two, I took a turn through the wood, and galloped to the village.

There, as soon as the pastor's ears tingled with the grateful dissonancy of the Indian chaunt, he hastened into his church; and as the joyful wretches were bearing their precious burden with triumph under the porch, he slammed the door in their face, nearly upsetting the whole concern. A parley took place, and an angry voice was heard from within: "Don't tell me, I know not any San Antonio but the blessed one who now sanctifies my church with his presence." "But our revered patron brings fifty dollars to pay for candles and fireworks."

Wide flew the gate, in walked the procession, the little dolls were placed side by side in a most decorous position, and they were then left comfortably to their own communing.

Is this Christianity? No; but it is a very common and supreme source of gratification to the lower classes of Mexican republicans; and it is what the Spanish priests have taught them as Christianity.

In every part of this enlightened country, when the sound of a muffin-bell, and then a monotonous dirge, is borne on the breeze, escape if you can; but if noticed by others, resolutely plump down on your knees in the softest dirt you can find. A poor American was stabbed, because he *only* knelt on the threshold of his shop in the city of Mexico;

and of course the said shop was gutted. The foreigners subscribed a large reward for the discovery of the assassin, but he was never found out. It is astonishing how such little incidents make a man's inclination to scoff at ceremonies waver.

Halting one Saturday evening in a town, I found to my great annoyance there was no mass next morning before eight o'clock: the difficulty was great. My muleteers said they would not stir before they had got rid of their weekly burden of sins; and to brave the sun in all its fury, appeared to me little short of madness.

I went to the padre, and found him a reasonable man. "Cannot you give us an earlier mass?" "Such things are done for a dollar, but many of my parishioners live a long way off, and would therefore lose the holy sacrament." I pressed three dollars into his willing hand, heard a mass at five o'clock, and I presume his parishioners carried their sins for another week.

The *fiestas* and half *fiestas* are of such frequent recurrence, that at least two working days out of the six are lost to labour; and it would be no difficult matter, by riding about, to have the delectable gratification of attending a feast every day in the year; for each village and hamlet has its own peculiar seasons of festivity, in addition to the general establishment of the popish calendar.

Many of these processions I attended, bearing

a burning taper under a burning sun; at first because I believed it necessary to my personal security, as well as decorous to show respect to the prejudices of people I had voluntary come to visit; my curiosity was gratified, and I was *not* called upon to make any profession of faith; for that virtuous casuist the Cura told me, "We only look to the outward visible signs of a proper observance of sacred customs, the inward thoughts must be left to another Power."

In short, I felt myself exactly in the situation of many persons in the British empire, who are told "to pay their tithes, and hold their tongues;" but I avoided the confessionals, those nice little receptacles for tattling and impertinent acknowledgements, by being always unexpectedly called away from the town at the stricter periods of necessary attendance.

The inhabitants, I believe, at first gave me credit for being in possession of so enormous a load of sin, as naturally to wish to go to the head-quarters of absolution and indulgences; for I know not by what authority the Mexican priesthood have arrogated to themselves the right, but such notices as the following are frequently seen in the churches: "The most reverend and sacred father, the bishop of ——, being full of compassion and mercy towards all mankind, does remit the undermentioned period of purgatory to those who shall repeat five Paternosters and fifty-three Ave Marias

in the chapel of Our Lady of the Cuyotes; nine hundred and fifty-three millions, nine hundred and fifty-three thousand, and nine hundred and fifty-three years, ninety and five days, nine hours, and three minutes. And he further, in the plenitude of his power, declares, that no other authority whatever shall have permission to lessen the above fatherly indulgence."—These gentlemen love to be particular.

I remember being at the considerable town of Tula during the celebration of the *Fête de Dieu;* the large square before the church and most of the streets were planted with green boughs, their tops being covered with smaller branches to keep off the rays of the sun, and decked out with wild flowers: every sainted image was paraded, some on wooden horses, others standing on thrones, St. Jago heading the cavalcade; but our Lady of Guadalupe being decidedly queen of the revels.

All this was highly correct, and most catholic; but I presume that the introduction of living animals suspended by the tail, and birds by the feet, writhing in agony as the monks and devotees marched under them, must have been owing to heathen Indian customs.

A miracle took place in 1825; the wooden representation of our Saviour at Chico, was said to have exuded drops of blood. The poor people were excessively alarmed; and so was I, for I knew it portended an attack on our purses: that

very day, I encountered two fat oily monks, coming towards our town to levy contributions; and by one of those accidents which will sometimes occur when you particularly wish it, my horse nearly overthrew the dirty visitors into a deep gully.

We addressed each other with the meekest benedictions; but our eyes looked much in the same way as I should fancy the devil regarded St. Dunstan: I heartily wished "the parcels of holy garbage," had gone down into the stream, for I knew they could not have been drowned; their grease would have smoothed the waves of a storm, and they must have floated.

Ceremonies, which in large and opulent cities are imposing, from the number of officiating priests and the splendour of their dresses, become ludicrous in the extreme when stripped of all such paraphernalia.

To see half starved urchins in dirty ragged surplices, either without shoes at all, or their toes peeping through one end and their heels at the other, in vain attempting with some charcoal in an incense pot to drown the fumes of a tobacco-tainted air; to observe priests at the altar turning every moment first on one side and then on the other, in order to spit more conveniently on the bit of carpet or the floor; cannot possibly impress the mind with any of those solemn ideas, which the religious rites of any service ought, and generally do give rise to.

Then the horrible discord attendant on the celebration of high mass in the smaller towns of the Mexican Republic, made me believe the devil was loose; or that a new act of "Der Freischutz" was being performed.

The music where I generally went to church, was composed of an organ, three fiddles, two French horns, and half-a-dozen guitars. During the pauses of the service, our ears were regaled with what are called voluntaries, or in other words, country-dances and well-known pieces not a little edifying: nor did the firing of small rockets and petards, or the incessant din of two great bells well beaten with sticks, add much to the devotion of the mind.

I crossed myself on these sacred occasions in the European style, inwardly begging forgiveness if there was more harm in saying my prayers under a catholic church than under the canopy of heaven. I beat my breast for fashion's sake when the little bell tingled and the hoste was elevated; but all this availed me nothing: I was not seen to dip my second finger in the holy water, and with my thumb-nail sign the cross first on my forehead, then between the eyes, next over my mouth, again across the breast, and lastly in the old-fashioned mode of head, stomach, and two sides. Worse than all, I always forgot to kiss my thumb-nail after so much manual labour.

At length I gave up the whole affair as a bad

business; boldly declared myself a heretic, but stoutly maintained I was a Christian, however unworthy of the denomination.

The lower classes of the community had long been firmly persuaded by their teachers, that heretics wore tails as a punishment for their wickedness; and it was quite amusing, until foreigners became numerous and scattered over the country, to observe the anxiety with which women and children and the most ignorant bigots, would watch an European when bathing or dressing. As soon as it began to be pretty shrewdly suspected, either that we did not wear tails, or else that our tails were much like those of other people, it was attempted to make them believe that we had the power of concealing our affinity to the monkey tribe: but at last the idea became generally scouted as a fable; and then the good padres acknowledged, that for some purpose or other beyond their comprehension, the Almighty had condescended to make heretics like other men.

"Have you really a baptismal name?" was a question continually asked at a distance from the metropolis. "Now, don't deceive us; because the priest tells us, that none but good catholics have; and that to intrigue with a Christian is only a venal sin, whereas to do so with a heretic is a damnable one; and we might just as well converse with the devil."

How long the present fanatical submission to

the clergy will continue, it is impossible to decide; but if the influx of foreigners is permitted for a few more years, the dominion of the priesthood will be shaken to the foundation. Already had the legislature of the state of Guadalaxara, taken the strong resolution of depriving its ecclesiastical establishment of all its estates and revenues; giving each priest a fixed salary from the public purse: but this law occasioned so many popular commotions, and had been so strongly opposed by the General Congress at Mexico, that most probably it was never carried into execution.

In Durango also, and some other parts of the Federation, a similar hostility had begun to show itself; while in the city of Mexico, parties ran so high after the discovery of a late conspiracy, that persons have been known in a public brandy-shop to drink to the destruction of all monks and priests.

A variety of publications were put into circulation on both sides of the question; one pamphlet pretty satisfactorily proved, that while the Republic was in a state of hopeless bankruptcy, the clergy throughout the Federation were collectively in the receipt of thirty millions of dollars a year. Another writer called on the people to remark, that while those termed heretics were distributing large sums of money to the sick and starving poor, not one single dollar had been contributed by the

priests and monks towards the relief of their suffering countrymen; and when this attack was met by an assertion that the heretics alone were the cause of the calamity, it was triumphantly shown that not a single foreigner had died of the fever, although about 20,000 of the natives had been carried off. The padres being thus forced to change their battery, said that the Supreme Being purposely preserved the heretics from the contagion, in order to try their hard hearts. The truth is, the Mexicans are not in a fit state to shake off entirely their dependence on the priesthood; and if done without great prudence, it will only be a useless destruction of an engine which might be made the most powerful means of improvement to the country.

The only time I met with the slightest molestation in the Republic, was the Sunday after I had arrived at the place of my destination, when two drunken Indians, with large knives, were scarcely kept from an attack by the flourishing of my heavy stick. The Cura heard of the affair, and it being very much his interest to patronize the new comers, he sent for the chief inhabitants of each village to a considerable distance, and so terrified them with threats of excommunication and damnation, that I never heard of another similar fracas while I remained in the district.

Not only might the worthy padres be thus beneficially employed, by making it their interest to

keep order, but they have really got such deep hold on the prejudices and consciences of all sorts of people, and in all sorts of ways, that it would seem wiser to keep them under than to attempt to drive them out.

A friend of mine one day remarked to a muleteer; "Your animals are weak and overloaded, they will never get safe up the country." "I don't fear," replied the man, "they go along with God and Jesus Christ, and will therefore go quite comfortably; the padre told me so."

There was some argument in the Congress, about the national advantages likely to ensue by cashiering one patron saint and electing another; one distinguished member rose, and proposed St. Thomas the Apostle; "for," said he, "the padre tells me St. Thomas undoubtedly preached the Gospel in Mexico; and as nobody can prove he did not preach it, why it is evidently proved that he did."

When an American vessel was wrecked near Alvarado, and among other articles a painting of the Virgin was saved, not only did the people there cry out, "A miracle! a miracle!" but individuals of far higher pretensions in the metropolis itself, used to beg they might be shown an object so miraculously preserved.

An entertaining scene took place at Easter of 1826, which I did not see myself, but had the following particulars from an eye-witness. A spe-

cies of sacred play seems to have been got up, similar to those so common in the darker ages of Europe; and the amusements lasted several days. On Holy Thursday, very many volunteers insisted on acting the part of the "Thieves," among whom was an English workman; they were accordingly led about with halters round their necks, and treated with various other marks of indignity, very much to the satisfaction of an immense assemblage of the faithful. At night a procession took place, in which were some thousands who carried lighted candles; and as the party moved along the summit of a steep ridge opposite to the town, the effect must have been beautiful. Surrounded by a blaze of light were seen the newly painted images of the church, decked out in all their glory, and on this occasion mounted on living horses. The poor animals, terrified at the shouts and gunpowder, dazzled by the lights, and uneasy at the stiff, unyielding nature of the riders, grew vicious and ungovernable; till, after many furious efforts, the saints were unhorsed, and tumbled down the steep bank some hundreds of feet into the rivulet. The consternation was dreadful, and well it might; for some of these sacred personages were totally disabled, others were sorely bruised and mutilated, all were filthily dirtied. The best that could be done to repair the disaster was done, and the procession moved on; the "Thieves" were bound, and lodged all night in the church.

I could not ascertain that any scourgings actually took place; although, from the continual chuckling of the honest narrator, it was evident he thought so. The next morning, at the proper hour, three effigies were crucified, and the whole history was gone regularly through; the Cura, in his most gorgeous robes, performing the office of several characters, sometimes handling the spear, at others holding the sponge. The crowd was suffocating, all bare-headed, and kneeling on the pavement of the churchyard, their faces bent down and their arms crossed on their breasts; but not a soul was allowed to come even within smell of the gunpowder continually exploding, unless the hand was furnished with dollars, fat fowls, or some much-prized delicacies.

When the time arrived, the Cura took down the representation of our Saviour, and pressed it to his heart with all the signs of real affliction; large tears rolled down his cheeks, as drops of water fall over a well greased tarpauling, and turning to the people he sobbed out, "He died for you! he died for you!" The congregation, whose deep groans had long been audibly heard, now burst forth into heartrending shrieks and lamentations. Fanatics, however, must fortunately have rest as well as their neighbours; every thing became hushed, the church and its yard were abandoned, and the Cura went home to count his fowls, his dollars, and his sweetmeats.

At a place where I was visiting, the men employed in the mines, amounting to nearly a thousand, were paid each Sunday morning after mass; and at the different pay-tables stood a person with a plate and small silver crucifix. As each individual's name was called out, he exclaimed on advancing, "the sacred Virgin is the purest of the pure;" and if he received a dollar, the man with the crucifix took threepence; if two, sixpence was deducted; and so on. Far from this tax creating any apparent dissatisfaction, all submitted to it with the most praiseworthy humility; and on one occasion only do I remember a man who, by some means or other, had got drunk too soon, asking why a medio was taken away from him? "For the holy sacrament," replied the collector. "I work hard for what I get, and will give what I like, but not have any thing taken; so where is my threepence?" "Oh, you sacrilegious wretch," roared the clerical officer; "you shall have to settle this with our master and holy mother church!"

I pretended not to hear what was going on, because I knew that the attempt of an Englishman to interfere on a similar occasion had only tended to embarrass the affairs of his company, without the smallest utility to the oppressed; but I took some pains to ascertain the sum of money thus extracted from the pockets of the labourers; and found that, taking the average of fifty-two weeks,

at least 1000*l.* was added to the annual income of the Cura by this means alone.

The pretence for this contribution was, that if a workman wanted to be married, or to have his child christened, or a funeral was necessary, no fees would be demanded.

While I was at the Real, a man was killed in one of the mines, and being brought to the town, was buried. Next day, a comrade of the defunct, having worked up his courage with pulque and brandy, came and complained that the corpse, instead of being placed withinside the church, was thrown into a hole in the yard of that edifice: the chief European, with his usual self-possession and *savoir faire*, said the matter was far too sacred for him to interfere with, and it must be referred to the Cura himself.

The man being drunk, and consequently valiant, launched out against the worthy padre, as an old swindler, but was finally sent to the priest with an account of his complaint; who no sooner heard of the abuse uttered against himself, than he boxed the ears of the poor devil soundly, and with a stick drove him out of the house; exclaiming, in a fury of passion, "I'll teach you to come and make complaints again, if you dare."

The labourer, followed by a good-natured crowd, rushed to the alcalde; but when the mob cried out that the Cura had beaten the villain with his own

sacred hands, the civil judge likewise took a stick and thrashed him severely, without listening to one word of his complaint; and very much to the satisfaction of all present.

The clergy being denied the privilege of matrimony, have invariably a *gouvernante* living with them, and often one or two "nephews and nieces" running about the house. These ladies, when companions of dignitaries of the church, are not by any means selected from the lower ranks in society; nor, as far as I could judge, are they considered in a degraded situation.

Among the most serious evils attending this manner of life is, that being bound by no civil obligations, these excellent holders of other men's consciences allow themselves the latitude of changing their female friends, as often as caprice or the loss of youth may make it desirable: I remember only two instances in which priests used the term "my wife."

There are throughout the Republic many singularly pantomimic representations of the creation, et cetera, in wax-work; but the two I thought most worthy of notice were in the cities of Puebla and Valladolid: that at Valladolid occupied two spacious apartments, in which the birth, life, and parentage of our Saviour, with various droll interludes, were set forth in figures dressed in the Spanish and Indian fashion; while the trees,

plants, and animals, were strictly those known in Mexico only.

I have sometimes thought in England, that our system of pews and cushions and seats of honour in churches, was carried a little too far; particularly in cathedrals and other fashionable chapels, where men in black gowns and tassels, and with jingling bunches of keys, lure you to a half-opened pew, but shut it in your face, if the shilling be not seen speedily between your fingers. I prefer the continental plan of hiring a chair for a halfpenny, on which you can sit or kneel without being incommoded, leaving space for ten times the number of people that could receive accommodation on an equal area in an English church. But nothing can be more disgusting or worse managed, than the places for public worship throughout the smaller towns and villages of the Mexican territories. Seldom is there either a bench or a chair; all kneel indiscriminately on the crowded floor, which is spit upon in every direction; and the effluvia arising from a multitude wrapped in serapes (cloaks), who rarely change their clothes day or night, or purify themselves with cold water, is absolutely terrific.

Then the being in close contact on all sides, for half an hour together, with persons whose hair swarms with vermin, and whose garments frequently present an equally filthy spectacle, added

to the inconvenience of being continually shouldered and jostled violently by men armed with crucifixes and plates, in their endeavours to squeeze between the devotees and collect money; all these things made it impossible for me to continue a catholic. I before stated, that I acknowledged myself a heretic, and cut the whole fraternity of priests and saints; nor would I have retained the friendly intercourse under such nasty circumstances, to have been myself

"Enthroned on the sainted hills."

Formerly, when contemplating the ruins of different abbeys, destroyed by Knox or other reformers, I was inclined to censure the ruthless rage which had caused such devastation; but since my residence in Mexico, where I have seen churches full of saintly images, each one more reverenced than the Almighty himself; where women, and even men, prostrate themselves on the floor at the raising of the hoste, and make the sign of the cross with their *tongues*, amidst the dust and filth; I would also, if the act tended to destroy such gross superstition, and to rescue poor suffering humanity from such horrible degradation, not leave one stone upon another.

CHAP. XI.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY; AGRICULTURE, &c.

This I find the most troublesome part of my work; as my notes are so numerous, that to select the interesting and avoid tautology is no easy matter; I will however do my best.

The Republic of Mexico is a vast country, extending from north to south between the parallels of latitude 40 and 16 degrees north, and in longitude from the 92d to the 124th degree west of Greenwich. Its shape is by no means square, but resembling more nearly the letter V; the northern parts of its territory being by far the broadest. The Andes of South America after continuing through the Isthmus of Darien, enter the Mexican Republic at its narrowest point; and almost immediately branch out into four mountainous ridges of very considerable elevation: one of these, either because it contains a great quantity of granite, or because it runs in a more direct line along the coast of the Pacific, is called the Sierra Madre; the other three are composed of porphyry.

I only pretend to give an account of such parts

of the country as I myself saw; but fortunately my excursions were in some of the more interesting and best cultivated districts, extended almost from sea to sea, and included the metropolis as well as several of the most celebrated vales.

The Gulf of Mexico near Vera Cruz, is bounded by a low tract of land about fifty miles in breadth; which is covered with bushes or by large swamps, that unite with a tropical sun to render it one of the most unhealthy parts of the continent: beyond this waste is seen a chain of finely marked mountains, from whose summit towers in all its magnificence of 17,375 feet, the snow-capped cone of Orizaba.

When the traveller has reached the base of this elevated region, he begins gradually to ascend to the top by a road of thirty miles in extent. He soon quits the parching heats for a more temperate climate; and often becomes enveloped in the misty clouds which hang at from four to six thousand feet above the sea, or gets wetted by the drizzling rain almost daily falling.

The moistness of the atmosphere covers every spot with an eternal green, except where the dark masses of volcanic cinders bid defiance to vegetation; the mildness of the air gives life and vigour to an innumerable variety of flowers, which flourish under the shade of evergreen oaks and other beautiful species of trees. On every side are seen ravines and precipices, knolls and crags,

broken by descending torrents and decorated with waving foliage.

If the day is fine, the distant ocean and vessels lying off Vera Cruz can be distinctly observed; while above is a long succession of heights and peaks, clothed with sombre forests of pine trees, and masses of bare rock projecting here and there, so as to render the features of the landscape more charming by the contrast.

This scene is lovely; and comprehends almost every change, from the burning tropics to the region of ice and snow. It is truly a land of fruits and flowers, where every production might be advantageously cultivated; but at present it is the garden of nature alone, and the few inhabitants dotted about the beautiful slopes, seem indifferent to the blessings of their situation.

On reaching the lowest point of this first Cordillera, which is about seven thousand six hundred feet above the sea, the fogs are passed, the sky is blue and clear; the sun shines hot, but the winds and shade are chilly. Vast arid dusty vales, destitute of trees, which during the rainy season are for a few weeks productive in coarse grass, and where the *Mirage* almost always cheats the eye with distant sheets of water, wind between the lofty pine ridges, and are also broken by isolated hills.

Near the towns and villages, spots of greater or less extent are ploughed up and sown with maize,

wheat, barley, or a few vegetables; these form the exceptions to the general waste. The second Cordillera is crossed at an elevation of 9000 feet, leaving a little to the left the Volcan Popocatepetl glistening at the height of 17,735 feet, and Iztaccihuatl at 15,700 feet; when the road descends into the valley of Mexico, whence another ridge of 10,000 feet conducts to the Vale of Toluca.

The third Cordillera forms the western boundary of what has been called the Table Land, which extends over a width of about two hundred and fifty miles; and this chain of mountains is surmounted by the Nevada of Toluca, whose crater is 15,159 feet above the ocean, and two hundred and three feet higher than the limit of perpetual snow within the tropics, as assigned by Monsieur Humboldt.

The features of the country between the third Cordillera and the Sierra Madre which rises at once from the Pacific, are of a totally different character from the other territories of the Mexican Republic. Deep narrow valleys abounding in the rank vegetation of a tropical sun, and often watered by a rivulet, are suffocating from beams rarely tempered by breezes; and are continually succeeded by abrupt precipices crowned with oaks, or the still colder summits of pine ridges.

The elevated tracts forming the central portion

or Table Land, contain, I should think, at least eight-tenths of the population of six millions; comprising almost all the Indian and mixed castes, as well as a large proportion of the Creoles. They are concentrated in some twenty large towns, or in the valleys of Puebla, Mexico, and Toluca, with the continuation of the two latter along the shallow rivers Montezuma and Lerma.

The hot unhealthy coasts are chiefly inhabited by the descendants of the few Negroes formerly imported; while the slopes and valleys of the warmer parts of the interior, boast a whiter and handsomer race of Creoles than can elsewhere be found in the ci-devant Spanish possessions.

The modes of travelling in Mexico are various. A well-constructed road of two hundred and sixty-four miles, did once exist between Vera Cruz and the capital; and though it has long been in a ruinous state, it is still possible with seven mules, and four others running by the side to relieve them, to drag a coach over the distance in eight tedious days. A lighter vehicle, resembling Sterne's *chaise de poste,* and derided in the appellation of a *volante,* can be made to run over the same ground, by means of three mules abreast, in six days and a half; but of course halting a day or two in addition, to rest the weary animals.

A sort of covered sofa, called a *litera,* carried on poles, which serve as shafts to a mule in front

and another behind, is often made use of from the coast to Xalapa; and in wet weather may be even taken on to the metropolis with advantage, as the journey can then be accomplished in six days; but by far the most usual, and, I think, the most agreeable way of proceeding, is to ride; driving before you two or three animals loaded with your linen and comforts, and at least one additional horse for the saddle.

Once only did I attempt journeying in a coach, because a severe ague prevented my riding; and I then determined nothing should induce me to trust a second time to such a conveyance. The wheels and axletree were of the heaviest construction, and in order to drag them over the various holes and rocky fissures formed by the rains, the mules were fastened at a very great distance; and it appeared to me, that not only the animals but the wheels also went along quite independent of each other.

It is certainly true, that coaches do 'roll' with time and patience, in various directions from the seat of government, for I know instances of their being conveyed to Guadalaxara and Zacatecas; but the continual breaking down of two carts, which were to carry some furniture for me a hundred miles, and their being three weeks in performing the route, which has only one ridge of mountains, completely disgusted me with trusting to any thing but the backs of mules in such a

country. Just enough of road however does exist, to prove with what facility a good government may, after the lapse of three or four generations, contrive to let travellers "roll in their carriages for an extent of fifteen hundred miles."

In passing over the more frequented paths of the central districts, it is almost always possible to buy a fat ribbon of meat with some white beans and lard, so as to form a savoury dish, the flavour of which is rendered more agreeable by a high seasoning of garlic and chile, and the mess can be washed down by brandy or pulque. On these occasions also, inns are to be found in the towns and larger villages; but as most Europeans would think the term very ill applied to such places of accommodation, I will give a description of the best I ever met with; accompanied by a few hints, *en passant*, for travellers, as to the correct mode of making themselves comfortable on such occasions.

We entered a court, round which was a stone building one story high, with sixteen doors numbered in succession; and on one of these being thrown open so as to admit the light, for there were no windows, I advanced to the entrance, but quickly made my escape on observing the brick floor teeming with fleas, and depositions of filth and nastiness of the most disgusting and offensive nature.

My servant and the muleteer advanced boldly

into this pandemonium; and by the free use of cold water, with a sort of wooden shovel and bundles of twigs, soon rendered it less horrible. In the mean time I had leisure to contemplate a perpendicular sun, which seemed purposely to pry into every corner, and deprive us of shade; while the loaded mules quietly bent their knees under them and laid down, so as to rest the weight of the baggage on the ground.

When I had ascertained they could not roll over and damage my portmanteaus, I would not allow them to be disturbed until the room was cleansed; but then the muleteers, by dint of kicks and large masses of stone thrown against their flanks, forced the poor animals, after various gruntings, to rise and be unloaded.

I now explored my intended domicile; and finding I did not sneeze quite so much as at first, took notice of four bare walls, a roof, a broad board elevated on upright sticks for a table, and two boards stretched out for my resting-place. To these latter I speedily turned my attention, knowing from sad experience what I was to expect; and having armed myself with a resinous piece of pine-wood, deliberately held the lighted torch under every crevice, till I had roasted all the inhabitants.

The air being now much purified, and the boards well sprinkled and wiped, my camp bed was unrolled, my portmanteau was placed as a seat,

and if I wished to shut the door, I lighted a candle.

The animals being now relieved of their various trappings, rolled themselves well in the dust, and one was mounted by a man with *lazo* in hand, who drove thirteen of them through the town to the watering-place, which is frequently half a mile or more from the inn: they returned, bearing green maize or other forage, and were then shut up in a shed, with the addition of Indian corn and barley for their food. At night, if another den could not be procured, my English servant used to spread his bed at the side of my own; while the Mexican servants and muleteers contentedly placed themselves outside the door in their serapes, and slept till daybreak, notwithstanding the extreme chilliness of the air.

In the morning, before it was light, the whole party was on the move; the beasts were driven to water, and, if possible, more corn given them; while I, to the utter astonishment and even alarm of the natives, who expected to see me suddenly stricken with death for such temerity, went through the usual European operations of shaving and washing.

As soon as every article was packed up, the mules were brought out to be loaded; and having a pocket-handkerchief placed over their eyes, were first encumbered with an enormous sort of

wadding or pack-saddle, then, by means of cords, the portmanteaus, &c. were suspended in equal weights on each side, and the said cord being passed twice round the stomach of the poor creature, a man on each side placed one foot against the beast, and with both hands pulled most strenuously, as if the animal or its belly could in no way be effected by their merciless exertions.

The mules in general stood with their legs firmly planted, and only showed their knowledge of what was going on by grunts, and puffing furiously, while I momentarily expected to see the poor creatures' bowels protruding through their skins; but I soon learnt that the operation was only a trial of stubbornness between the animals and their masters, for so effectually do the former swell out their sides, that in half a mile the cargoes are quite loose, and the cords again want tightening. Some few of these creatures have the strange fancy of kicking off every thing each day, until they have been as regularly beaten for ten minutes, when they allow themselves to be loaded; but they are not usually very vicious, being, in common with all the other animals, far more tractable than their brethren of the old continent.

When all was ready, I headed the *mêlée* in a broad Mexican hat, blue military jacket, and loose fustian trowsers, with lage spurs, and my many-coloured serape or cloak fastened to the crupper with thongs. From the elevated pummel of the

saddle, hung on either side a cow-skin, to protect my legs in wet weather, the pockets of which were convenient for stowing a compass and memorandum books, &c. A sword was suspended over the left skin; over my back was slung a barometer, thought by the natives to be an engine of war, and I carried one of Manton's double-barrelled detonating fowling-pieces in my hand. Thus accoutred, and with two good servants also armed, and sometimes a muleteer or more, I rode about the country like a hog in armour, unmolested and without danger. Indeed my gun was quite as much dreaded as admired, because the people said it required no flints, but could go off under water just as well as any where else.

After the account I have given of the best sort of inns I have met with, it will not surprise my readers that I availed myself of every possible opportunity to seek a lodging in the haciendas or manor-houses we might pass; and very rarely did I meet with a refusal, or incivility after having once been admitted.

The estates attached to these mansions are often extremely large, thirty or fifty miles in circumference not being at all uncommon. Their value depends on the vicinity of a market, the command of water, and numerous other circumstances; for I know one of twelve square leagues in extent which does not yield 300*l.* a year, and others of far less territory that produce much greater in-

comes; as for instance, an estate in the valley of Mexico, said to be thirty-six miles long by three wide, which gives, according to report, a revenue of nearly 20,000*l.* a year.

In erecting the numerous buildings attached to an hacienda, the Spaniards and their descendants have invariably fixed on a spot quite bare of trees; the outside walls are white-washed, and the intense glare occasioned by the reflection of the sunbeams from them is most painful to the eyes; indeed the injurious effects of this practice upon the sight, is indicated by the prevalence of weak eyes amongst the Creoles throughout the Republic. The Indian huts, on the contrary, are frequently placed in shady and most pleasing situations.

A Mexican manor-house on the Table Land, is very far from being contemptible, either in size or construction. The dwelling apartments are built round a court, with a corridor, which has a well in the centre, and is adorned with some orange-trees or flowers; the rooms are cool and airy, furnished with a few straw chairs and benches, a rush matting under them, and a table. The barns, stables, and other outbuildings, are all built of stone. As it is the practice of the country to allow travellers to pass the night at these haciendas, I never hesitated to ride up to any one which was conveniently placed on my route, and soon had my bed and baggage placed in an empty

room, bargaining with the resident for the necessary provisions for my companions and the horses. I then selected various trifling presents, of razors, scissors, needles, or pictures of saints; and by their assistance usually gained so much on the good-will of the inmates, as often to receive kisses instead of a bill when I took my departure.

The only department of agriculture in which the Mexicans excel, is irrigation; for the almost total want of water has forced them to learn how to make large reservoirs to catch the torrents which fall in the rainy season, and then to distribute the moisture by means of numerous channels, some of which are often several miles in length, and not unfrequently constructed of masonry.

At the head of the articles of culture should be placed the maize, or Indian corn; not only because it forms the most general food of the people, but as it comes to maturity both on the cold mountain summits and in tracts closely bordering on the scorching plains of the coast. In those situations where it can be well watered, and is not exposed to the bleakest winds of the night, the stalks will grow to the height of ten or twelve feet, and bear seven, and sometimes eleven ears of corn.

Wheat and barley are grown on the high lands in sufficient quantity for the consumption, and of excellent quality; the latter is mixed with the maize as food for the horses, which is then found to be of a less heating nature. Oats are unknown,

as likewise are all artificial grasses; nor are the farmers even acquainted with the use or mode of making hay, but feed their cattle on chopped straw and the dried maize stalks.

Very small portions of the land attached to an hacienda are cultivated, the remainder is a waste, only covered with vegetation during the wet weather; and to which the owner is willing enough to admit your animals at sixpence per head per month, provided you will pay the man who is to look after them. To all my remarks on the want of attention in cleaning the crops, and the apathy of leaving even rich soil unproductive, I have received the same answers: "Why should we trouble ourselves to pull up the weeds, when it is much easier to throw the seed over a greater quantity of ground? Why should we cultivate more of our estate, when we can neither eat nor sell what it already yields us?"

A friend of mine, a great landowner, showed me one day an immense quantity of straw (paja), and said, "I don't know what to do with it; I dare not set it on fire for fear of my house, and the freight of carrying it to market is more than its value: will you send and take it for nothing?" On calculation, it was found more economical to buy at the mines, than to cause animals to make a journey of thirty miles to fetch their provender.

A proprietor assured me, that to make his wheat, barley, and corn pay the growing, he was obliged

to turn carrier himself; buy his own mules, and freight them at his own charge the hundred miles to Mexico city. And yet it has been a very favourite scheme with many thinking members of the British public, to purchase vast tracts of land in the new Republic for the cultivation of flour. When will it be understood, that the interior of Mexico is far less adapted to commerce than the interior of Africa? that it has no roads, and never can have canals? So that while the United States could import flour at Tampico for three dollars the barrel, the produce of the country was selling there at eighteen dollars for the same quantity.

The plough used by the Mexicans has a blade or share very similar to our own; but from it a long piece of wood slants upwards between two oxen, whose horns are then fastened to a cross-bar; so that they may be said rather to push forward the machine with their heads, than drag it with their chests.

The first sight I obtained of two carts in a farm-yard delighted me; I seriously began to fancy myself among people of the golden age of ignorance and happiness. Each wheel was formed of the circular section of a large tree about three feet in diameter, and was five inches thick; the pole was so heavy that I could scarcely raise it from the ground, but it was fastened to the necks of the unfortunate oxen which drew the

vehicle by means of a cross-bar bent into curves. The body of the cart was composed of upright stakes at considerable distances from each other, and bound together by means of skin thongs and twisted twigs.

Not a bit of iron was to be discovered in this primeval piece of mechanism; and I watched anxiously to see it move. Six pair of oxen drew it to the wheat field; where a very moderate load being put on, it was necessary to yoke two additional pair to the unweildy machine, before it could be extricated from the earth and safely deposited with its contents at the barn.

The mode adopted for threshing the wheat and barley was also novel. A circular space well paved and walled round to the height of four feet, was thickly strewed with corn; when about a dozen unshod horses being turned in, were driven round and round with a whip till the grain was beat out, and the straw cut into small pieces by the action of their feet. Fresh supplies of wheat being thrown in, the horses were kept hard at it for a couple of hours; when they were relieved by others. The maize is rubbed out of the ear with the hand; as the husk is too tough for the feet of animals.

The maguey, a species of aloe, which furnishes the liquor named pulque, is, I believe, peculiar to the colder regions of Mexico, and deserves a particular description. It is planted on the poorest soil, where it grows without much culture to the

height of six or eight feet, having leaves large in proportion; and after nine years throws up a long straight stem which bears a chandelier-like flower, though it is sometimes shown by gardeners in England as a wonder occurring only once in a century. As soon as this stem begins to appear, the plant is ready to make the natives drunk; and they carefully cut out the shoot at its root, which leaves a large hollow or cup almost as big as a hat, and that is covered with a stone; into this basin all the juice of the aloe empties itself, and will produce the value of sixpence daily for eight or ten months together, when it dies. The taste of this liquor (pulque) is at first sweet like a kernel; but the heat of the atmosphere in a few hours causes it to turn rather acid, to ferment and become intoxicating. I believe it to be cooling and wholesome if drank with moderation; and attribute the offensive smell and taste it sometimes acquires to the dirty pig-skins they preserve it in at the large towns, for I found it an agreeable beverage when travelling; and not only bought it at the different villages, but often got off my horse and dipped a small mug into the cavity of the plant when the liquor was cool and fresh; and on these occasions I never observed any thing unpleasant in the flavour.

The maguey was however the most valuable plant of the Mexicans previous to their intercourse with Europeans, without any reference to the

utility of its juice. The fibrous portion of the leaves gave a good substitute for thread, its long sharp prickles served as needles; the threads, when well twisted, are still formed into strong cords, and if completely soaked and beaten can be made into a very tolerable paper.

The cattle are large and good-looking, but the meat is generally much leaner than would be expected; which can only be owing to the scantiness of the grass during the greater part of the year, and its not possessing much nutriment. The same cause produces a scarcity of milk, and cream I never saw in the country; the cheese is poor stuff, almost white, and if not absolutely saturated with salt would have no taste at all. The butter is detestable. The sheep have longer legs than the English breed, are thin, and bear but a small quantity of wool; which appeared to me but of an indifferent sort. The horses are small but active; the mules and donkeys equal those of Europe. Game is very rare, except to the north of Guanaxuato, where I am told it abounds; but with all my exertions during numerous long journeys, I never met with more than four deer, one turkey, about a dozen pie-bald hares, a few rabbits, and two or three coveys of quails or partridges, with some wood-hens. An excellent pointer that I had taken out with me from England, entirely lost her sense of scent, owing to the rareness of the atmosphere, and was of no use.

Wild ducks, and water-fowl of every kind, abound beyond even what I have witnessed in Holland; very beautiful humming-birds are numerous, and seemed to feed on the honey-dew attached to the leaves of the oaks; the small eagle and carrion vulture are seen every where; and a bird unknown in Europe, called corre camino, from its always running swiftly along the paths, is common on the "Table Land." This seems to be a species between the pheasant and partridge, resembling the former in shape, and the latter in colour; but it has a top-knot on its head.

Of lions, wolves, and tigers, I could not move without hearing accounts; but never myself saw other wild animals than the cuyote (fox), and one beast something like a sloth: of snakes I discovered two as thick as my wrist, and three smaller ones; armadillos are more common; and a small ground squirrel is very numerous in the hot valleys near the Pacific, making the earth unsafe for riding over.

If game, snakes, or wild animals, were really abundant in the central districts of Mexico, it is singular that I should have rode over very nearly 3000 miles without being aware of the fact; particularly among forests and ravines well adapted to their shelter. The only animal I found of serious annoyance was a vampire-bat in the temperate climate of Zacualpan; which, during the night, regularly sucked the blood of the horses and

mules, and left them much weakened the next morning; but that creature is easily kept off, by hanging before the openings of the shed branches of the prickly pear (nopal.)

In addition to the large sheets of water in the valley of Mexico, which give rise to the Montezuma river, that runs down to Tampico; and of the swamps in the vale of Toluca, where the Lerma commences a course which is terminated in the Pacific at San Blas; I have only seen the two lakes of Araron and Patzquaro, neither of which have the slightest pretensions to the picturesque: but there is, in the state of Guadalaxara, a really magnificent expanse, called lake of Chapala; and in the hot countries near the two oceans, are several rivers of considerable importance.

For cheapness of provisions, beautiful undulations of country, variety of climate, and park-like scenery of scattered oak, cedar, and pine trees, with masses of rock and abrupt precipices; I saw no other extensive portion of the republican territories which could be compared with the state of Valladolid. It is always agreeable to be able in a short ride to increase the warmth of the temperature ten degrees, and to leave the young green corn of the mountain heights, in order to join in the harvests of the valleys; but this fine state only sends four members to the Federative Congress, and cannot therefore have above 160,000 inhabitants.

The view from the house I occupied at Tlalpujahua, was one of the most lovely which imagination can paint: I had fitted up my rooms with glass windows, and a balcony in front, having a small garden of shrubs and European flowers; where I never could walk without feeling my absence from England less irksome.

A short steep descent went down to a rivulet, and immediately beyond rose an amphitheatre of broken mountain ridges, to the elevation of 1300 feet, clothed to the summit where the crags would bear vegetation, with evergreen oaks, pines, and the arbutus tree: scattered about amid the foliage were Indian huts and patches of corn; a few gigantic cypress trees, and the capulina, or Mexican cherry.

In that district, 8500 feet above the sea, the mornings are almost invariably heavenly; and although perhaps piercingly cold in the shade, with large icicles, and sheet ice as thick as a dollar, if in the months of December or January; yet when at half-past six the sun rose above the hills, the thermometer hanging in the balcony would speedily mount 20° or 30° above the freezing point.

During the rainy season of July, August, and September, the clouds began to collect about one or two in the afternoon; the thunder then rolled, the lightning flashed vividly, and the rain poured down for some hours as if the flood-gates of heaven were opened, making the air excessively

chilly: the following day, on awakening, all was again serene. I only remember two days of incessant rain or mists; but many which were free from wet or thunder during even the stormiest part of the year.

The sudden violence with which the torrents, caused by a tropical rain, rush down and overflow the ravines in their passage to the vale, can scarcely be credited by those who have never witnessed the fact: in another part of the country an unfortunate Englishman was carried away and drowned; and in the course of one ride, after urging a remarkably powerful mule six times through a stream usually not ankle deep, I was afraid any longer to persevere; but waited till a short cessation took place in the storm, when the waters sank almost as rapidly as they had risen.

The climate of those upper regions of Mexico is decidedly healthy; but the vicissitudes of temperature are so great and so sudden, that severe colds are easily caught, the lips get chapped, and if the face is exposed to the sun, the skin of the nose and chin will soon peel off; neither men nor animals can run, or use violent exertion for the same continuance as in a lower and denser atmosphere; and even in the valley of Mexico, which is 1200 feet less elevated, it was found that horse-races of more than half a mile heat were out of the question.

I believe it is seldom that a traveller can be

justly accused of wilfully relating what is positively untrue; but certainly, the *whole truth* is very rarely given. Europe has been told, that "Mexico contains every variety of climate and soil in its vast territories, where almost all the products of the known world might be cultivated;" and *that* fact was stated in such a manner, as left it to be inferred that the Mexican Republic *is* a paradise. Would it not have been more honest to have added: "but unfortunately, such has been the effect of a bad government under the most idle and degraded nation in Europe, that little or nothing has been done; and therefore the people are sunk into the lowest stage of ignorance, misery, sloth and superstition."

While I was resident in the new Republic, and continually called on to take journeys of two or three weeks' duration, I have freely stated my disgust at the sight of ruinous towns situated on plains destitute of a tree, and of the caravansaries replete with abominations; but no sooner did I turn my horse's head towards the Pacific, and quit the Table Land for the wildernesses of the Sierras, than the mode of life had ten thousand charms in my eyes. The magnificent forests of oaks and pines which there cover the slopes, are rarely encumbered with underwood; not a sound is heard, except perhaps, the sighing of the breeze among the lofty branches; scarcely a bird or an animal is seen, and even such slight symptoms of

animated nature are hushed during the heat of the day. Now and then a small clearing would present a few huts to the view, with a greater variety of vegetables and fruit-trees than usual, beautiful creepers and flowers without any scent, and strange looking shrubs without leaves, but bearing an immense number of assimilations to white and yellow-coloured lilies. The piru tree, with its light green leaves like the tansy, its boughs bending down as the weeping willow, and decorated with bunches of small seeds of a bright scarlet colour, has always a most elegant appearance; so likewise has the palma Christi, or castor oil plant. The result of many thermometrical observations indicated, that the mean temperature of this delightful region during day and night, was 68 degrees. But I used to laugh heartily while looking about me at the recollection of the caution I received from my friends in England, who, in allusion to my fondness for sweet things, advised me "not to indulge too much in the luscious fruit which would tempt the eye and invite the appetite upon every hedgerow."

On these excursions I took with me a brass bedstead and mosquito net, a nest of kettles, provisions, and all the conveniences for eating; as fowls and tortillas (soft cakes) were the only articles it was certain to meet with. If the path was steep, the animals would place their hind against the fore

feet, and slide a little way down; if a deep river was to be passed, ourselves and baggage were placed in a rude boat formed of the trunk of a tree, while the unsaddled animals were driven into the water, and followed by swimming, we holding the end of the coloured lazo which ornaments the neck of each horse. This last operation, in those parts of the Rio Bolsas where alligators abound, was by no means pleasant, for the mules got alarmed, and plunged so much as almost to upset the canoe.

In the hotter valleys we found the smaller sugar-cane, not that of Otaheite, now cultivated in the West Indies; the indigo and cotton plants, the banana and other tropical fruits, with wildernesses of the prickly mimosa bushes. The thermometer I have known in the beginning of November to show 104 degrees of heat, from ten in the morning till three in the afternoon, although suspended under an open and lofty shed.

Inns, or any other covering except the spreading branches of a tree, were totally out of the question in such a climate; and I will give a short account of my manner of proceeding on one occasion, when I was obliged to accept of eight dragoons as a guard of honour, or, in plain language, when my vanity was to be tickled in order to induce me to take a bad mine.

At a very early hour we started; and shortly

after the red and angry sun had risen as from a threatening furnace, which created a sort of terror, we looked out eagerly for shady trees and a rivulet; a mist seemed speedily to hang over every object, the effects of heat on a parched and arid waste. On the joyful sight of green foliage, and consequent certainty of finding water, our march was hastened; the animals were unloaded and turned loose, with the long lazo dragging after them; cold fowls and tortillas, with wine or brandy, were produced from the saddle-bags, and my brass bedstead and mosquito net were quickly placed under a tree. Some hours were then passed in dozing, looking at various-coloured lizards, or creeping along the stream to shoot some gaudy plumaged bird; while the soldiers smoked cigars, gambled, and slept, until it became sufficiently cool to proceed. One night we bivouacked near a deserted hut, where a large lime-tree enabled us to luxuriate with lemonade. Two large fires were lighted, which threw a faint glare on the really picturesque crags around. The servants were busy in preparing fowls and rice for the supper of the party, and toasting tortillas for me to eat with my tea; some of the dragoons were absorbed in attention to a game of cards, others were looking after the one-and-twenty animals feeding near us. I was seated on a portmanteau at the foot of my bed, writing these notes, having stuck a couple of wax candles into the hollow trunk of an enormous tree,

against which rested my gun and sword, and from whose boughs hung the various accoutrements of the escort. Far above my head were suspended some of the long nests I have before described, and two or three curious glutinous hives made by the wasps and bees, in a conical shape, which undulated with the motion of the twigs they were fastened to.

I have not much more to say under the head "Description of Country," and fear that some of my readers may think too much has been already said; but as the subject is interesting to myself, I am inclined to hope it may prove so to others.

The people about Huetamo and the banks of the Bolsas, are much more friendly and open-hearted than is usual among Mexicans; they are also better looking, and some of the women are handsome; but many are afflicted with goitres, and others have large spots of a dead white on their necks and arms, the nature of which disease I could not get explained to me by the natives.

At the foot of some of the abrupt precipices of the Sierra Madre is the mansion-house of a cattle estate, over the territories of which we passed forty miles in a straight line; and I was much amused by the habits of the owner, an old lady of rather prepossessing appearance. I found her seated under the balcony spinning some wool, and immediately took up my quarters in the same shady recess, telling her how much gratified I had been in meeting her

pretty daughters at a distant village. I soon ascertained that she sent two thousand head of cattle annually to the city of Mexico, and with sheep, goats, horses, and other property, was in the receipt of an income of from thirty to fifty thousand dollars.

When she was asked for some sugar and other articles (for each hacienda has a shop) she went into her own room, which I had an opportunity of seeing was not remarkable for cleanliness or order; and returned bearing several things, with one finger thrust through a soft cheese: the price she insisted on was rather high, and I observed her fingers had left a mark, by no means in favour of the cheese.

Some of the thorn bushes in those hot regions, bore on their trunks and thick boughs a great number of hollow wooden fruits, varying in size from a small apple to a cocoa nut, which when sawed in halves form excellent cups. Between the branches of others, the white ants often construct enormous nests of earth and chopped straw; and one beautiful species of tree, like an ash, seems to absorb the dew of the night with its leaves, and then during the heat of the day shed the moisture; for I once got nearly wet through when taking my *siesta* under its foliage.

The river Bolsas, above mentioned, is rather wider than the Thames at Richmond, and in general deep and rapid; but in places where the bed is composed of granite or other primitive rocks, the

navigation, even with the usual coracles of wicker-work, is much impeded by large masses projecting above the water. It falls into the Pacific at Zacatula; passing through a district which abounds in valuable copper mines, lodes of iron, veins of silver, and the sand brought down by the torrents from the Sierra contains small particles of gold.

What numerous laughable anecdotes I could recount, which have occurred to myself! Once, I had stretched my bed on some poles laid across a small fold in which pigs were kept, having of course ejected the grunters; but during the night an ass contrived to intrude himself, and his back being too high, upset me and my bed into the filth. Another time, I slept in a store-shed, where half of an ox recently killed was hanging up; besides a dozen cloth bags, through which pulque was draining, candles fresh dipped in the grease-pot, and many other savoury etceteras. On a third occasion, I occupied a room in an hacienda, when a hole in the roof let in such a torrent of rain, that I was completely flooded before sufficiently awakened to make my escape.

I have bivouacked on the pine mountains by the aid of an immense fire, after having that very day eat my dinner amidst sugar-canes and tropical vegetation; I have spread my bed on ground swarming with ants, only being able to procure a number of stones to place under the mattress, and allow the insects free passage: but being blessed with a good con-

stitution, and fond of a life of fatigue, I have found myself perfectly refreshed next day, and just as eager to ascend another ridge, or explore the sombre depths of a narrow ravine.

A friendly garrulous Mexican, who for fourteen days accompanied a German gentleman and myself, seemed never to get tired, when we reached Valladolid, of dilating on how he had seen me wash, and shave, and undress when going to bed. At first, I thought some tokens of approbation were visible on the faces of the company, and I began to hope the fine aqueduct of that city might become more in request; but an old lady remarked, "that heretics certainly did do very strange things in this world, but suffered most dreadfully for it in the next;" and thus dispelled all my vain expectations of seeing ablutions become fashionable.

In the upper country, how often have I been obliged with sticks and stones to keep off the pigs, when——but, like the tongue of an old gossip, I go on *currente calamo*, quite forgetful that I shall tire out my readers long before I have exhausted my budget of notes or memory.

The small well-built city of Vera Cruz, which usually consigns half its annual visitors to the grave; the nature of the black vomito fever itself; the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa, which stands on a sand-bank half a mile from the shore, and being built of soft coral, cannot be splintered or greatly

damaged by shot; have all been so frequently described, that I may well spare my readers the repetition. Nor am I sure there will be any novelty in mentioning, that for six months in the year the Gulf of Mexico is subject to the most violent northerly winds; and that the gulf stream is unfathomable, of a deeper blue than the surrounding waves, flows at the rate of from two to three and a half miles the hour, and that its water is six, sometimes ten degrees warmer than the ocean in general.

CHAP. XII.

ANTIQUITIES AND ORIGIN OF THE MEXICANS.

THE most curious, and from various circumstances which connect them with the first colonization of America, by far the most interesting monuments in the Mexican territory, are the pyramids of Otumba or Teotehuacan. They are situated north 35° east from the capital, at about the distance of twenty-four miles in a straight line, and on a branch of the great valley; which, by winding round some mountains, and crossing a few insignificant ridges in other places, joins the extensive plains of Apan, Tlascala, Puebla, and Perote.

So little had I been led to expect from report, that these ancient edifices would be found more worthy of attention than the three ruinous pyramids of Cholula; that I had neglected to provide myself with the means of measuring them, or to make such arrangements as might have enabled me more thoroughly to investigate the extraordinary scene I was about to visit. I remained on the spot more than two hours, ascended both the pyramids, rode about among the smaller heaps of volcanic stones, and sketched the exact appearance

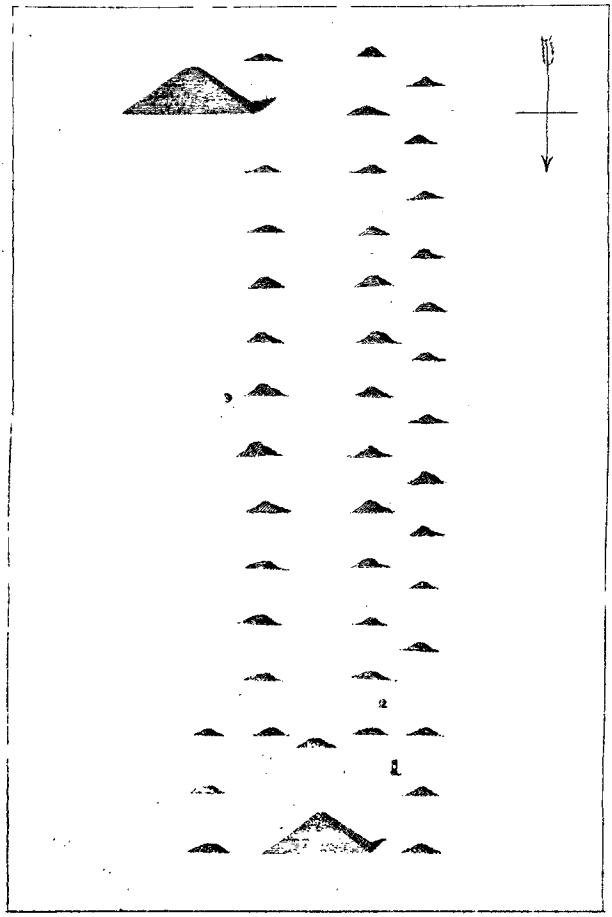
of the whole group, as contemplated from the summit of the pyramid called the Moon. The accompanying plate is a copy from that sketch.

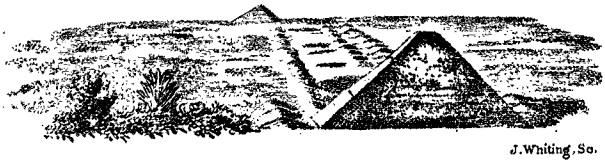
I have never ceased to regret I was not prepared to make a more accurate and detailed inspection of what I then saw; but I must urge in palliation, the fatigue of loaded mules, the impatience of servants under a broiling sun—who no doubt wished I might break my neck, and the necessity of riding nearly thirty additional miles during the heat of the day. It is astonishing how much more trivial all those little circumstances appear to me now in England, than they did on the 23d of last March, under a burning sun at Teotehuacan.

The two pyramids of Otumba have their sides and shape perfectly distinct, facing the four cardinal points of the compass; with an inclination to the summit of about 45 degrees, and those summits appearing at a short distance to end in a peak: they are placed at half a mile from each other, north and south; in such a position, that the east base of the lesser is in a direct line with the west base of the greater.

Each has two stages about three feet wide, at regular distances up the sides, and running quite round the building; they had been covered with a cement painted light blue streaked with red, which is yet distinguishable in many places, and pieces of which I brought away: it seemed to me

PYRAMIDS near OTUMBA.





J. Whiting, Sc.

London, Published by Carpenter & Son, Old Bond Street, March 20th 1828.

that these stages had been connected by a sloping path at the north-west angle; but if such were really the case, the remains are not sufficiently perceptible to justify a decided conclusion in the affirmative.

On the summit of each pyramid is a small platform, once apparently covered with cement, and probably surmounted by a temple; but a few modern ruins show clearly, that the Spanish conquerors had erected chapels on the sites of the Mexican edifices.

In no part could I discover any thing resembling an entrance; but several large holes which had been dug into the sides, either from curiosity or avarice, gave me the opportunity of ascertaining that neither layers of brick, or adobas (unburnt) were used in the construction: common volcanic stones, with which the surrounding plain is strewed, appear to have been first agglomerated into the pyramidical mass, by means of a cement composed of water, earth, and mortar; and the faces of the four inclined planes afterwards smoothed and perfected as to their shape and proportions. The latter operation has been effected with so much care, and the fissures so well closed, that the small nopal, and other bushes now growing on them, have scarcely proved injurious to the workmanship.

I judged the pyramid of the Sun which lies to the southward, to be 200 feet high; its north and

south bases to be 200 yards long; its east and west to be 160 yards; the platform at top to be 30 yards by 20: and I considered the pyramid of the Moon to be 160 feet in height, 130 yards in length on its north and south sides, 100 yards on the east and west, with a platform of 20 yards by 12 wide.

I have never calculated whether the above proportions would accord with the presumed inclination of 45°; but give the supposed dimensions as I wrote them down on the spot.

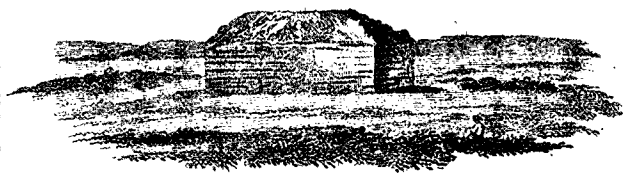
Between the two pyramids, arranged in regular order, and forming a kind of street, are a vast number of small mounds or tumuli of volcanic stones; varying in height from five to twenty and thirty feet: these did not seem to have had their sides smoothed, but wore the appearance of heaps raised to commemorate the dead.

To the right hand of the pyramid of the Moon, at the spot marked in the sketch, stands the head of an immense idol, carved in a hard species of porphyry; and in another place a stone altar extremely well fashioned, which I measured as well as I could with my pocket-handkerchief, and then compared with my own height: this rude mode gave eleven feet long (for it had been thrown down), four wide, and four thick.

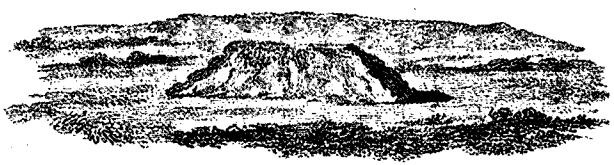
The ground further to the right, outside of the tumuli, was so thickly scattered with small earthenware heads, and grotesque faces of men, that

PYRAMIDS at CHOLULA.

I.



II.



III.

J. Whiting. Sc.

London, Published by Carpenter & Son, Old Bond Street, March 20th 1826.

my two servants, assisted by an Indian, picked up a considerable quantity while I was rambling about the lesser edifice: the difficulty of conveyance made me select only a few; some of which I afterwards gave away, and wood-cuts of others are inserted in these pages; but the Indian assured me I could purchase, at the different huts in the neighbourhood, far better and larger specimens of ancient workmanship.

At the eastern base of the great volcano of Popocatepetl, seven miles west 10° south of the large city of Puebla, and perhaps sixty miles in a direct line south-south-east from those of Otumba, are the three pyramids of Cholula.

The first is a conical hill, 200 feet high, covered with large shrubs, bushes, and rubbish, surmounted by a church, and having far more the appearance of an artificial mound than of any pyramidical building: but an inspection of various places where it has been cut into, either for forming a road, or other purposes; proves it to have been built of layers of unburnt bricks (adobas) cemented together with earth and mortar, and faced with small, flat, thin stones purposely shaped to complete the edifice.

The second of this group of pyramids is much lower, but its four sides have been cut down perpendicularly, so as completely to expose the internal composition; and I have endeavoured to represent the regular layers of unburnt bricks in the

plate, though the size of adobas, being about nine inches square and only one inch thick, renders it difficult to give the proper effect. I could not find any signs of an entrance or passage into this pyramid; it seemed to be one compact solid mass.

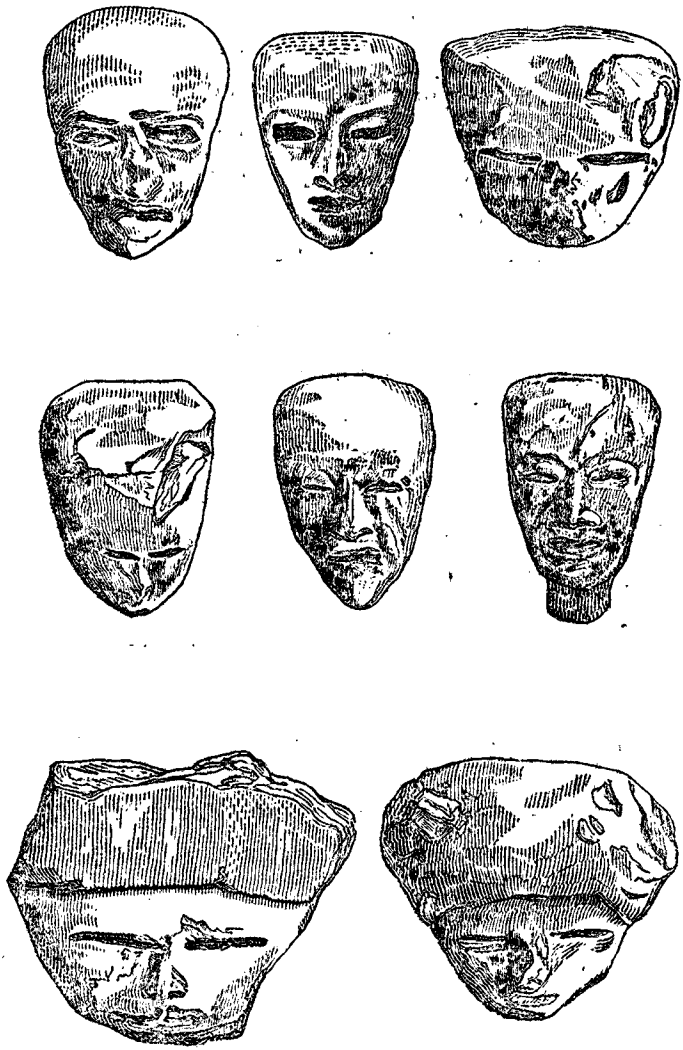
The third is much less remarkable than either of the others, and had a patch of corn on its summit when I visited it: I could not procure any idol heads, or other vestiges of antiquity which the natives might have discovered and preserved: but I brought away one of the small hewn stones from the largest pyramid.

The city of Cholula is still of considerable size, having a population of 14,000 persons; but it has been entirely rebuilt since the conquest, the convent and spacious square with arcades having been founded by Cortez himself: the immediate environs are better cultivated and more thickly inhabited, than is often seen in the Mexican Republic.

The ancient city of Tezcuco is also without any remains of its former inhabitants: its walls have been quite destroyed, and the lake which used to wash them, does not now approach within four miles. This sheet of water is so dirty and stagnant, that if not impregnated with salt, it would quickly become putrid.

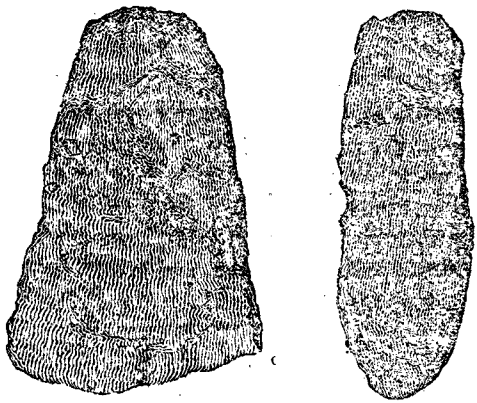
A few miles east of Tezcuco, and at the foot of the Cordillera, is an isolated conical hill about 700 feet high; now covered with loose masses of rock and nopal bushes, but evidently once formed

THE FOLLOWING EARTHENWARE HEADS WERE PICKED UP AT THE PYRAMIDS NEAR OTUMBA.—*See p.* 193.

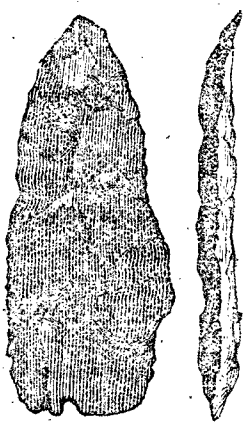


into a succession of terraces; and from appearances at the top, no doubt had originally a temple there: two-thirds up its southern side is a projecting mass of fine red porphyry, which seems to have been bedded by nature into the coarser greyish formation; and in it has been hewn a well-executed cavity called Montezuma's bath. A square of six feet has been cut into the polished stone, with steps of the same material leading down about three feet; in the centre is a circular basin four feet and a half in diameter, five feet deep, and with similar steps to the bottom: the water was brought from the neighbouring mountains in a small channel of hewn stone and cement, some miles in length, and many parts still in good preservation.

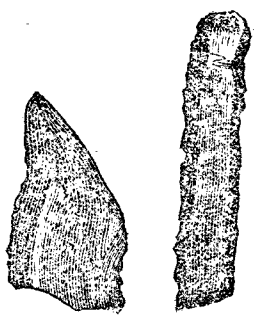
On the summit of the hill is another mass of porphyry, which has been fashioned with tools, and has steps to ascend it: I imagine this to have been the pedestal of some idol. On various parts of the eminence can be traced the ruins of walls, and of stages covered with painted cement. Pieces of sharp obsidian, arrow heads of the same substance, with broken bits of red, black, and light-coloured pottery, are found in abundance; wood-cuts of some of which, with a stone axe head, are inserted in the following pages.



Stone Axe.



From Niagara.

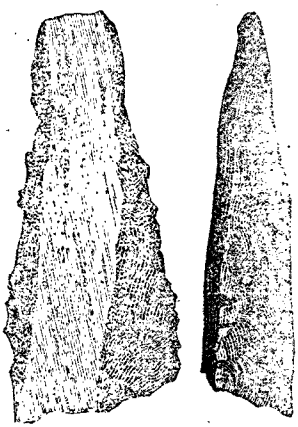


Obsidian Arrow Heads.

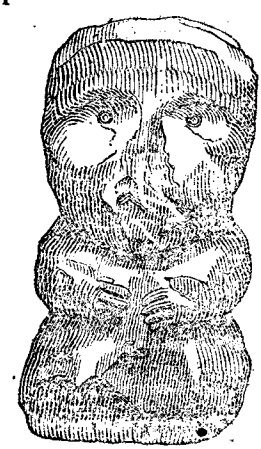
The arrow head marked Niagara, I have introduced to show that the northern Indians of Canada made use of similar weapons to those of Mexico; only that they fashioned them in flint instead of obsidian: this specimen I procured at the Falls of Niagara in the summer of last year.

Five miles south-west of hence are the ruins of Huisotla; the church of which I am inclined to believe is built on the site of an Aztec temple. A

piece of wall is now standing there of two hundred and fifty yards in length, twenty-five feet high, five feet thick; and decorated near the top with rows of small rounded stones, purposely bedded in the mortar. The space enclosed was of considerable extent, as there are several masses of ruins and rubbish; and the situation was strong naturally, having very deep gulleys or torrent courses on its north and south sides. Over the former ravine is a high oval arch, said to be of a date antecedent to the Spanish conquest; this may be an erroneous idea, but no doubt beams of timber were always placed across the narrow cleft. Close to the north side of the modern church, the stone head of an immense serpent protrudes out of the ground; and a hundred yards west, is a stone column seven feet high, with a well-carved pyramidical piece of hornblende on its top.



Obsidian Arrow Heads.



The accompanying wood-cut is the figure of a small idol I procured at this place: and had I been

able to wait a couple of days, I was told many other curiosities of a similar nature could be brought to me.

Built into the wall of the west side of the cathedral in the city of Mexico, is the immense stone calendar of the ancient inhabitants: it is a species of basaltic hornblende of a dark colour, and so hard, that it must have been carved with instruments of a stronger and less brittle nature than obsidian.

The various characters drawn on it have been accurately described in other works; and therefore I shall not enter into minute details of this extraordinary relic of ages long passed away; but content myself with stating, that it proves the Aztec century to have contained fifty-two years; each year three hundred and sixty-five days, divided into eighteen months of twenty days; and five days added to the last month, which were considered unlucky, when no business of any sort ought to be transacted.

This arrangement of time differs not from the usual computation of the Egyptians and Carthaginians, excepting so far as might be expected to have originated in the love of novelty or in the ambition of founding a new system. Those nations had twelve months in every year, of thirty days each; and five additional days were added to the last month, on which the most solemn festivals in honour of their gods were held.

In the court of the University at the capital is

an ancient Mexican idol of large dimensions; and close to it is the sacrificial stone of the same people. This last is curiously ornamented with emblems and devices; is about eight feet in diameter and two thick, with a cavity in the centre which I suppose received the blood of the victim, letting the superfluity run over one side by means of a shallow channel.

In a room of the same edifice are sixteen small idols carved out of very hard stone, and in two or three instances identified by their resemblance to Egyptian models; there is also a heap of thirty or forty parchments, which are covered with drawings, writings, and hieroglyphics, and would doubtless afford a rich treat to any antiquarian who could decipher them. Most of these latter evinced an attempt at the representation of horses, and could not therefore be older than the year 1520; the care bestowed on their preservation may be inferred from the fact of my being obliged to get a soldier to break open the door, the key having been lost.

On the volcanic island of Aniche, which is about the centre of lake Patzquaro, I discovered a few hieroglyphic figures cut on a rock; on the walls of the church at Zacualtipan, I have already described a stone carving which exists; and at Irimbo, twenty-five miles west of Tlalpuxahua, are some small mounds said to be Indian fortifications, but which might have been tumuli or any thing else, as far as I could perceive. These are all the anti-

quities I have myself seen within the Republic of Mexico; but I heard from an intelligent German gentleman, that he had discovered some small pyramidical heaps near the road between the towns of Orizaba and Cordova.

I cannot resist the temptation of introducing a few words, as to the origin of those individuals from whom the Mexicans are descended. An opinion may be deduced, not only from the ancient monuments I myself saw, and others which are stated on good authority to exist on the hills between Guatemala and Chiapa; but also from the repeated and apparently unvarnished accounts given by Cortez and his followers, of the traditions then subsisting among the native Indians; and from the remarkable corroborating testimony which may be gleaned from the writings of Herodotus, Diodorus, and other celebrated historians.

It would ill become the writer of these pages, whose profession and acquirements are little adapted to the cultivation of literature, to affect the investigation of a subject which has occupied the attention and divided the opinions of eminent antiquarians. But the circumstance of my having visited and examined upon the spot some interesting remains of Mexican splendour, naturally induced inquiries on my return, by individuals who felt an interest in the curious question of Montezuma's ancestry. Among those with whom I more frequently conversed, was Mr. Beaufoy, of Upton Gray; who delighted me by the recital of

information he had collected in the course of his reading, and which an uncommonly retentive memory enabled him to bring to his aid in illustration of this subject. Convinced of my own inability to pursue the investigation, yet regretting that so much research should be lost to my readers, I prevailed upon my uncle to reduce into writing the substance of his verbal communications; of which the following is a copy.

"The regularly organized, and, setting aside their horrid religious rites, the highly polished state of society in which Cortez and his companions found the Mexicans, renders it almost impossible that they should, as Dr. Robertson supposes, have been only three hundred years before the Spanish conquest a horde of wandering savages. Diaz says, that the great temple had been built above a thousand years; and when it was destroyed for the purpose of erecting the church of St. Jago on its site, the Spaniards collected, in sinking the foundation, great quantities of gold, silver, and other valuables; the deposit of which, Guatimotzin, then alive, stated to be upon record in their ancient historical paintings.*

"The ruins discovered by Mr. Bullock at Tisosingo; the specimens of sculpture of which he brought models to England; and the great calendar

* Diaz, p. 148.

stone, called Montezuma's Watch; exhibit a skill in architecture, sculpture, and astronomy, which could hardly have existed in a recently formed nation; and if of foreign growth, must have been derived from a people to whom the study of the arts and sciences had long been familiar. It may therefore be an object of interest to consider, to which of the nations of the Old World the arts, the manners, the customs, the style of building, and the religion of the Mexicans, bore the greatest affinity; and it will perhaps appear, that Assyria, comprising Egypt and Phœnicia,* with both of which, either by war, alliance, or conquest, Assyria was closely connected, bears to Mexico a resemblance which it would be difficult to explain upon any other supposition than an intercourse, prior to the time of Columbus, between the Old World and America.

"It is proposed, therefore, to consider this subject under the four heads, first, Of Tradition; second, Manners, Customs, and Arts; third, Public Buildings; fourth, Religious Worship. Bernal Diaz del Castillo, a volunteer, and subsequently a captain under Cortez, has related in a plain unvarnished manner, with every appearance of truth, what he himself witnessed.

"I. Tradition.—Before Cortez reached Mexico, Montezuma despatched an embassy, consisting of two of his nephews, and four old noblemen,

* "When Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury."—*Par. Lost.*

to inform Cortez, that Montezuma was convinced the Spaniards were of the same ancestors with himself.* In the interview between Montezuma and Cortez, at which Diaz seems to have been present, the former told Cortez, that the Spaniards were undoubtedly those who had been mentioned by his ancestors, who had predicted that there would come certain men from that part where the sun rises, to govern these countries.† The next day Cortez waited on Montezuma, exhorted him to embrace Christianity, told him of the Christian belief as to the creation of the heavens, the earth, and the sea, &c. Montezuma, after refusing to change his religion, added these words: 'In regard to the creation of the world our beliefs are the same;‡ and we also believe you to be the people who were to come to us from where the sun rises.'§

"II. Manners, Customs, &c.—Montezuma had two hundred of his nobility as a guard, in an apartment adjoining his own; of these, certain persons only could speak to him; and before

* Diaz, p. 73.

† Ibid. p. 135. This was a natural anticipation on the part of persons who came from a country so far superior in arts and arms, to that where Montezuma's ancestors, probably few in number, had settled among the savage natives.

‡ It is hardly necessary to observe, that the Mosaic account of the creation is eastern.

§ Diaz, p. 137.

they entered the presence chamber, they changed their rich mantles for others less ornamented, but clean, took off the covering of their feet; and thus barefooted, with their eyes fixed on the ground, and making three inclinations of the body, approached the sovereign. Their address was, 'Lord, my lord, great lord.' When men of consequence came from a distance, they entered the palace barefooted, in a plain habit; and instead of going up to the gate directly, they advanced in a circuitous manner. All this strongly represents the etiquette of an Asiatic court; and the removal of the covering of the feet has been from time immemorial to this day an indispensable mark of respect in the East.

"Diaz says, 'that Montezuma's gardens, which were of great extent, were irrigated by canals of running water, and shaded with every variety of trees. In them were baths of cut stone, pavilions for feasting or retirement, and theatres for shows, for the dancers and singers; all which were kept in the most exact order by a number of labourers constantly employed.'*

"If this be compared with Plutarch's account of the Persian gardens, the resemblance is striking. 'Tissaphernes, in compliment to Alcibiades, named after him that garden which of all he possessed most excelled in beauty; which was re-

* Diaz, p. 143.

markable for the salubrity of its streams, and the freshness of its meadows; which was set off with pavilions royally adorned, and retirements finished in the most elegant taste.'*

"After Montezuma was made prisoner, he requested Cortez to permit him to go hunting in a certain district, which was prohibited to all others on pain of death. Montezuma being arrived where he was to hunt, landed for that purpose; and as the place abounded with game, he had soon killed a great quantity of various kinds, such as deer, hares, and rabbits.†

"Julius Pollux says, 'that parks, planted with stately forest and fruit trees of every kind, well watered and stocked with plenty of wild beasts, were in great request among the Persians.'‡

"The country about Babylon, which Herodotus describes as similar to Egypt, must have caused the same exertion of skill in the construction of dykes, causeways, and conduits, as appeared in those which the Spaniards admired at Mexico. The city of Cholula had an excellent manufacture of earthen-ware of three colours, red, black, and white, painted in different patterns.§ These colours correspond with those of the Babylonian kiln-burnt bricks, which Mr. Rich describes as

* Langhorne's Plutarch, vol. ii. p. 162.

† Diaz, p. 163.

‡ Spelman's Expedition of Cyrus, p. 9, note.

§ Diaz, p. 124.

white, red, and blackish.* Some of the Mexican statuary so exactly resembles the costume of Egypt, that it might pass for the production of the latter country.†

"It may be remarked, that in the prints of Babylonian sculpture given by Mr. Rich in his second memoir, is one of an Assyrian kneeling under the winged globe of Egypt.‡

* Rich, First Memoir, p. 61.

† The following three figures were picked up at the pyramids near Otumba.

‡ Was this and the other engravings given by Mr. Rich,

"When Montezuma attended Cortez to view the city and temples of Mexico, he was preceded by two lords, having sceptres in their hands; and he himself carried a small rod, one half of which was gold, and the other wood, bearing it elevated, like a rod of justice.*

"As soon as Montezuma was made prisoner by Cortez, being accused by the latter of having ordered his troops to attack the Spaniards, Montezuma took from his wrist the signet of Huitzilopotli, with which he was used to confirm any order of great importance, and commanded the officer complained against to be sent for.†

"Herodotus says, 'that every Babylonian has a ring with a signet, and a stick curiously wrought, on the top of which is placed either an apple, a rose, a lily, an eagle, or some other thing; for to wear a stick without such an ornament is accounted indecent.'‡

"In the book of Esther it is said, 'Write ye also for the Jews, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's seal; for the writing, which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's seal, may no man reverse.'§

"III. Public Buildings.—The ground where-

picture or hieroglyphic writing, as employed with inferior skill at Mexico?

* Diaz, p. 143.

† Ibid, p. 154.

‡ Littlebury's Herodotus, p. 123.

§ Esther, viii. 8.

on the great temple stood, was 'equal to that occupied by six of the largest buildings in the country: from the base it diminished to the summit, whereon was a tower in which idols were placed; and from the middle of the ascent to the top were five concavities, like barbacans, but without parapets. The temples of the country varied in their structure, but all agreed in having a number of courts, and a double inclosure: each province had its peculiar gods.'* Strabo says, that the sepulchre of Belus was a pyramid of one stadium in height, whose base was a square of the like dimensions. Herodotus allows the same size for the solid base, on which rose seven other towers, diminishing gradually to the top. It is now generally acknowledged that the whole height of the building (not that of the lower division alone) was a stadium, or 500 feet. This is proved by Major Rennell, and from the actual survey of the ruins by Mr. Rich. The construction of the pyramids of Cholula is internally of bricks dried in the sun, covered externally with a coating of stone: this is obvious to any traveller who visits them. Mr. Rich, speaking of the temple of Belus, says, 'The impression made by the sight of it is, that it was a solid pile, composed of unburnt bricks, and, perhaps, earth or rubbish; that it was constructed of receding stages, and faced with

* Diaz, p. 148 et seq.

fine burnt bricks, having inscriptions on them; laid on a layer of lime cement.' *

IV. Religious Worship.—Diaz thus describes the great temple of Mexico. 'From the square we proceeded to the great temple; but before we entered it we made a circuit through a number of large courts, the least of which appeared to me to contain more ground than the great square in Salamanca, with double inclosures built of lime and stone; and the courts paved with large white cut stones, very clean, and where not paved they were plastered and polished. The ascent to the temple was by 114 steps; when we had ascended to the summit of the temple, we observed on the platform, as we passed, the large stones whereon were placed the victims who were to be sacrificed. Here was a great figure which resembled a dragon, and much blood fresh spilled. Montezuma came out from an adoratory, in which his accursed idols were placed; Cortez then addressing himself to Montezuma, requested that he would do him the favour to show us his gods. Montezuma having first consulted his priests, led us into a tower where was a kind of saloon; there were two altars highly adorned, with richly wrought timber on the roof; and over the altars

* Rich, p. 33, Second Memoir. The description of the great temple is given under the next head, as more immediately belonging to religious worship.

gigantic figures, resembling very fat men; the one on the right was Huitzilopotli, their war god, with a great face and terrible eyes; this figure was entirely covered with gold and jewels, and his body bound with golden serpents; in his right hand he held a bow, and in his left a bundle of arrows. The little idol which stood by him represented his page, and bore a lance and target, richly ornamented with gold and jewels. The great idol had round his neck the figures of human heads and hearts, made of pure gold and silver, ornamented with precious stones of a blue colour: before the idol was a pan of incense with three hearts of human victims, which were then burning, mixed with copal. The whole of that apartment, both walls and floor, was stained with human blood, in such quantity as to give a very offensive smell. On the left was the other great figure, with a countenance like a bear, and great shining eyes of the polished substance whereof their mirrors are made: the body of this idol was also covered with jewels. These two deities, it was said, were brothers; the name of the last was Tescatepuca, and he was the god of the infernal regions;* he presided, according to their notions, over the souls of men: his body was covered with little devils with tails of serpents. An offering lay

* Does not this bear a strong analogy to the Osiris and Typhon of the Egyptians, and to the Jupiter and Pluto of other heathen nations?

before him of five human hearts. On the summit of the temple, and in a recess, the timber of which was most highly ornamented, we saw a figure half human, and the other half resembling an alligator inlaid with jewels, and partly covered with a mantle: this idol was said to contain the germ and origin of all created things, and was the god of harvests and fruits. The walls and altars were bestained like the rest; and in this place they had a drum of most enormous size, the head of which was made of the skins of large serpents: this instrument, when struck, resounded with a noise that could be heard to the distance of two leagues; and was so doleful, that it deserved to be named the music of the infernal regions. This, with their horrible sounding horns and trumpets, their great knives for sacrificing their human victims, and their blood-besprinkled altars, I devoted, and all their wickedness, to God's vengeance.'*

"Herodotus says, that 'within the uppermost tower of the temple of Belus a spacious dome is built; in which a magnificent bed is placed for a female, who is supposed to be visited by the

* Diaz, p. 145, et seq.

"First Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that passed through fire
To his grim idol."—*Par. Lost.*

deity; and that in a chapel, which stands below within the temple, is a large image of gold, representing Jupiter sitting: that on the outside of this chapel is an altar of gold, and another of a larger size, not of gold. Upon the first, sucking victims only are sacrificed; upon the other, only cattle of full age. That upon the latter, one thousand talents in weight of incense are annually consumed. That formerly there was a second statue of gold, which Xerxes removed, after killing the priest.'* It appears, therefore, that upon the summit of the Mexican temple, withoutside, was a great dragon, before which the victims were sacrificed: that within the tower, in each temple, (viz. that of Mexico and that of Babylon) was a chapel, containing two figures of gods; with two altars—at Mexico within, at Babylon without the chapel—on which, in the first city, human hearts, and, in the second city, animals, were offered, with incense. Diodorus Siculus relates, that the temple of Belus contained, at the top of the ascent, three statues of beaten gold, viz. those of Jupiter, Juno, and Rhea: the first in the attitude of walking; the last sitting, with two lions standing at her knees, and near her two immense snakes of silver; that of Juno had the right hand upon the head of a snake, the left holding a sceptre, ornamented with jewels. It may here be observed, that the

* Herodotus, p. 114.

worship of both Assyria and Mexico was particularly connected with this reptile, two of the deities above-mentioned, in each country, being accompanied by one or more snakes. Diaz states Huitzilopotli to have been the war god of the Mexicans, and Josephus asserts that the Assyrians, under the name of Belus, worshipped Mars.* The golden image set up by Nebuchadnezzar must have been of the dragon or snake form, for its length, sixty cubits, was ten times its breadth; and the horrible punishment of the three Jews, who refused their worship, was, probably, a sacrifice to Moloch, or Baal, (the same deity under different names,) in whose honour the image was erected. It may further be remarked, that the Babylonian goddess, called by Diodorus Rhea, is considered to be the same as Ceres; who like the half-human and half-alligator Mexican god, was supposed to preside over harvest: the form of the latter, however, resembled that of Dagon, who is understood to have been always represented as half-man, half-fish; and is supposed by some to have been the inventor of bread corn, and that his name is derived from the Hebrew *dagon*, frumentum. Philo Biblius calls him Jupiter Aratrius.†

* Encyclop. Britannica, article *Baal*. Bullock says that Teoamiqui, the companion of the god of war, was a female; as Herodotus says of the god Belus.

† Encyclop. Britannica, article *Dagon*.

"Diaz states, that 'the priests in Mexico wore long black vestments, with long hair clotted together, and their ears lacerated in honour of their gods:'* he had previously stated, 'that the priests of Tlascala, clothed in loose white garments, came with their incense pots, and their long hair matted and clotted with blood, which flowed from recent cuts in their ears. The nails upon their fingers were remarkably long.'† Robertson says, 'that the priests never approached their altars without sprinkling them with their own blood;'‡ which exactly corresponds with the practice of the priests of Baal, as stated in the first book of Kings.§ The use of incense, both in public and in private, appears to have been equally common in Assyria and in Mexico:‖ and from the visits of the worshippers of Baal to the southward of Sierra Leone, as will presently be shown, are probably derived the human sacrifices so much resembling those of Mexico; and like them accompanied with death drums and horns, which the Ashantee sovereign and his priesthood practise at this day to a dreadful extent.¶

"It remains to be considered, in what manner

* Diaz, p. 149. † Ibid. p. 109.
‡ Robertson's America, vol. ii. p. 303.
§ 1 Kings, chap. xviii. verse 28.
‖ Herodotus, Diodorus, Bullock.
¶ Dupuis, 114, 126, 238, &c.

a migration from Assyria, from its dependencies, or from Carthage, the colony of Tyre, might have reached Mexico. Between the years 616 and 600 B. C., Nechus, king of Egypt, furnished certain Phœnicians with ships, for the purpose of circumnavigating Africa: the Phœnicians sailed from a port in the Red Sea, landed in different places, where they sowed the ground, awaiting the harvest; and after two years' absence, returned to Egypt by the Straits of Gibraltar.* About thirty or forty years subsequent to this expedition, Egypt and Tyre fell under the dominion of Assyria; † and soon afterwards the Carthaginians, stimulated, as Major Rennell thinks, by commercial jealousy of a rival power, fitted out a fleet, under Hanno, of sixty ships, which, including women, had 30,000 persons on board; to establish Liby-Phœnician cities on the western coast of Africa. Though the cities so founded were all situated to the north of the Senegal, (i. e.) of lat. 15° 30′; ‡ yet Hanno, in a second expedition, reached the Sherbro river, in lat. 7° 10′, and to the southward of Sierra Leone.

"Between the years 485 and 464 B. C. Xerxes ordered Sataspes to circumnavigate Africa, by proceeding to the southward, through the Straits of Gibraltar: Sataspes doubled Cape

* Herodotus, p. 364.

† Rennell's Geography of Herodotus, p. 744.

‡ Ibid. p. 741.

Siloes, which Major Rennell judges to be Cape Cantin, lat. 32° 30′: * and prosecuting his voyage, though without success as to its object, passed many months at sea. Of these three expeditions, all of which penetrated far within the latitude of the trade winds, we have an account; but, doubtless, very many others, either for discovery, or trade, or settlements on the coast of Africa, have sunk into oblivion. Now it is easy to conceive that a fleet may have been driven by a storm, or conducted by an error of the mariners, so far from the African coast as to be carried by the trade winds across the Atlantic; and then, by the winds which usually prevail in that quarter of the globe, and the westerly current, through the Caribbean Sea to the shores of Mexico. From thence, according to the knowledge of navigation possessed by the ancients, adapted to little more than coasting, it was almost impossible for them to return. Their countrymen, in all probability, supposed that the vessels, and their crews, were sunk in the ocean.

"Perhaps it may be more difficult to offer a satisfactory conjecture as to the date of this occurrence, than it is as to the event itself. The great temple at Mexico having evidently been an imitation, upon a smaller scale, of the temple at Babylon, it is to be presumed that

* Rennell's Geography of Herodotus, p. 742.

the migration to America preceded the destruction of the latter by Xerxes. It should likewise be observed, that for some time, at least, before the destruction of the temple of Belus, only animal victims, as appears from Diodorus, were sacrificed on its two altars. Neither does Herodotus, who was contemporary with Xerxes, nor does Diodorus, insinuate that human victims ever were offered in the temple at Babylon; other authors however positively assert the fact. At Mexico, human victims, if not the sole, were certainly the usual oblations. Did the Persian conquest by Cyrus, between the years 536 and 529 B. C. put a stop to the practice in Babylon?* Or did the improved civilization of an immense capital forbid enormities, which, like other superstitions, might long afterwards continue to exist in its provinces? In the time of Josiah, a contemporary of Nebuchadnezzar, the worship of Moloch was common in Judea; and Nebuchadnezzar himself, as before remarked, appears to have had a disposition towards barbarous rites. It was not till the reign of the last-mentioned king, about 600 years B. C. and 120 years before the destruction of the temple of Belus, that the Assyrian dominion, by the extension of its conquests, could send

* The horrid custom of sacrificing human victims to appease or conciliate their gods, was first practised by the Babylonians; and from them it was communicated to the superstitions of the surrounding nations.—*Mavor*, vol. ii. p. 333.

forth maritime expeditions from Syria and Egypt. It may here be observed, that if the fleet which is supposed to have reached the coasts of Mexico, was composed (a circumstance by no means improbable) partly of Egyptian vessels and crews, it might account for the frequent resemblances to the architecture and sculpture of Egypt, which have been discovered in Mexico. Upon these various considerations, the eastern migration to America may be conjectured to have taken place, during, or very soon after, the reign of Nebuchadnezzar; corresponding nearly in time to the expedition of Hanno, 570 years B. C. and about 2100 years before the Spanish conquest."

About forty-five years ago, orders were sent out by the King of Spain to the captain-general of Guatemala, to have a survey made of some extensive ruins, supposed to be the Palencian city, often mentioned by authors.

Seven miles south-west of the town of Palenque, on the hills between the states of Chiapa and Guatemala, fourteen stone houses in tolerable preservation were discovered; and remnants of walls and buildings were seen scattered about to the distance of several leagues. In the houses were found various curious pieces of sculpture and hieroglyphics; on the faith of which, Dr. Paul Felix Cabréra has

deciphered the following story. I have seen drawings of the above hieroglyphics; and not being able to elucidate any more history from them than from the grotesque carvings in our own cathedrals, I consider Senor Cabréra's theory is as likely to be right as any other; except what relates to voyages back to Europe, which I must take permission to believe a mere fable.

A chief, named Votan, descended from those Hivites who had settled on the coasts of Africa and Spain, when driven from the land of Canaan by Joshua and the Israelites, and therefore calling himself *Culébra* (a snake), quitted the Island of Hispaniola, where his grandfather, Hercules Tyrius, had founded a colony three hundred and eighty-one years before Christ; and with seven families went to the coast of Tabasco, at the southern end of the Gulf of Mexico, in the year 291 B. C.

Finding the interior of the country healthy and agreeable, he is stated to have made no less than four voyages back to Europe and the Canary Isles; but for what purpose does not appear, as no mention is made of his bringing out more settlers, or in fact of his doing any thing but taking a little amusement at Rome. When he visited Chiapa the last time, he found seven other families of the Tzequil nation had joined themselves to his old friends, and who declared they had been driven across the Atlantic by a storm. The fourteen

united families very properly refused to submit to the authority of such a determined wanderer as Votan; and he went away much chagrined, declaring he would come back and force them to submission.

This colony founded a city called Tlapallan, and the kingdom of Amaguemecan, the ruins of which are now seen near the town of Palenque; and it continued to prosper and increase in numbers for a term of ninety years, either by births alone or by fresh arrivals from Europe also.

Diodorus relates (says Dr. Cabréra) that when the Carthaginians began to quarrel with the Romans, the senate of the former Republic thought it necessary to pass a decree, forbidding any further emigrations, and even took some coercive measures to bring home various colonies which had already been founded. The doctor further declares, from his manner of reading the hieroglyphics found at Tlapallan, that an expedition from Carthage landed and destroyed the former city, in the year 181 B. C. killing many of the inhabitants, and dispersing the others in all directions.

A large party, after wandering about eight years, founded the city of Tula and the kingdom of Tulteca, about sixty miles north of the present capital of Mexico; others seated themselves subsequently at Cholula, or penetrated into South America. The same author asserts, that St. Thomas the

Apostle preached the gospel both at Tula and Cholula, teaching the people various useful arts, who obeyed him as their benefactor, priest, and ruler; and that the tradition of the Indians declares him to have been a tall corpulent man of a white complexion, with a thick black beard; and wearing a loose dress or tunic, which descended to his feet.

St. Thomas is said to have left the Mexicans to go southward and visit the old kingdom of Amaguemecan; and as he never came back, the people of Tulteca worshipped him as the god of the air, under the form of a snake covered with feathers, calling the idol Quetzalcoalt.

Dr. Cabréra further remarks, that the Egyptian, Punic, and Mexican languages, have so strong a resemblance to each other, they must have sprung from the same origin; and he positively declares, that the eclipse which took place at the crucifixion of our Saviour, is regularly marked down in the Mexican calendar, as one of the extraordinary natural phenomena worth recording.

To those who have made a voyage to the West Indies, and enjoyed the benefit of the trade winds, which will sometimes, for weeks together, blow a steady gale from the eastward; the conjecture is feasible enough, that vessels of the ancients may have been driven by storms or errors of the mariners so far from the coast of Africa, as to discover the New Continent: nor will it surprise any

man who has witnessed the continual anxiety of masters of merchantmen lest they should pass by Barbadoes without seeing it, notwithstanding the modern advantages of chronometers and sextants, that ships of the ancients should be drifted to the main land without touching at any of the islands.

I was on board a vessel once, which was carried by a current nearly sixty miles beyond her reckoning in twenty-four hours; so that at noon, next day, we found ourselves, to the astonishment of every body, far beyond Cape Catorce, and Antonio of Cuba. Such circumstances might have occurred in former ages, and with the then knowledge of navigation, such an error would be irretrievable.

This conjecture, as to the origin of the Americans, backed as it is by the authenticated visits of the ancients to the western shores of Africa, appears to me much more probable than the route by Behring's Straits; for mankind would scarcely have sought refuge in the inhospitable regions of the frozen north, until a dense population, or the cruelties of oppression, made them careless where they went to obtain refuge and an asylum.

It was just the reverse in regard to the savage animals, for they were driven from the more genial climes; and in some of those great Tartar hunting parties recorded, it is easy to conceive that wild beasts may have been drifted by the ice across Behring's Straits, which are only thirteen leagues

in width, and much intersected with islands. Thus can the Mosaic account of an universal deluge, and the existence of ferocious animals on the continent of America, be most satisfactorily reconciled.

I by no means intend to assert, that in comparatively modern periods emigrations from Asia have not taken place by the route of Behring's Straits; on the contrary, I feel convinced the Indians of Canada and of the United States are quite a different race of people from those of Mexico and the south. It is likewise pretty clearly proved, by Mallet and other writers, that the Esquimaux are descended from the Greenlanders, the Icelanders, and the Norwegians.

CHAP. XIII.

NATURAL CURIOSITIES OF THE MEXICAN REPUBLIC.

MANY persons may probably consider the volcano of Jorullo to be one of the most extraordinary objects on the American continent; because it has been formed at a more recent date, than any similar phenomenon we have received accounts of. It broke out on September 28, 1759, after having alarmed the neighbouring inhabitants for some months by unusual noises under ground; it continued violent for eighteen months, threw up its cone, and gradually became extinct.

I have visited Jorullo twice, each time ascending the cone; walked round the crater with my barometer and thermometer, scrambled down to the bottom, thrust my head and shoulders into various crevices to procure flowers of sulphur, and retired perfectly satisfied that it was not more wonderful than any other volcano.

Some twenty of the natives, who had assembled on the first occasion to accompany my companion and self, under the impression we could only be seeking for gold and silver, posted themselves

about the hill, so as to watch all our movements; and when they observed us half-roasted, groaning under the weight of bits of stone and sulphur, they laughed at us as two of the silliest individuals they had ever seen.

By looking at the map of Mexico, my readers will observe that there are seven different groups of volcanic peaks, beginning at Tuxtla or San Martin, to the east of Alvarado, and ending with Colima, on the Pacific, which run across the ridges of mountains almost in a straight line, and at an angle of about sixty degrees. The first six of these I have seen repeatedly, and am not certain whether I did not get distant views of the volcano at Colima; but I can positively assert that not one of them smokes, or ever did so in the memory of man, except that which I am about to describe. The vapours hanging on their summits are often extremely deceitful, as I shall hereafter have occasion to mention.

Jorullo is situated in a small valley, surrounded by abrupt and lofty precipices often of basaltic appearance, and with many of those low conical hills around, which are so common in the Mexican territories, carrying on their summits the hollow of an extinct crater. My companions, a German geologist, and an Englishman well acquainted with Calabria, Etna, and the Lipari Isles, agreed with me, that so far from being astonished at an eruption having there taken place, it was surprising

others did not continually break out in every direction.

The spot is in a direct line between other volcanoes, and has no doubt therefore a subterraneous communication with their fires. The whole district, I was assured, had a more broken aspect than any in Sicily; and it was so different from what is represented in a drawing by M. Humboldt, that at first I thought he could not have visited the scene itself; an old man, our guide, declared however he had also accompanied the baron many years before, when the mountain and its vicinity was exactly in the same state as at present; and I have since heard the drawing was executed by a Parisian artist from description alone, and not from a sketch.

The base of the cone of Jorullo is 2890 feet above the sea; and is encompassed for half a league either with ridges of cinders, broken into a variety of fissures and forms, or by finely-powdered black dust several inches deep and very fatiguing for horses to pass over. The cone is excessively steep, more so, I was told, than that of Vesuvius; and the highest point of the crust of its crater is 1224 feet above its base.

On approaching the mountain there is not the slightest appearance of the volcano being in activity; but small quantities of vapour, like steam from a kettle, may be seen to ooze out of a few narrow fissures; and in them I found the thermometer

rose to 88°, 112°, 130°, while the air in the shade was 75°. The crater itself is rather more than a mile in circumference, and in some places the crust is so thin, that I had barely room to walk with care; it is like a funnel, perhaps 700 feet deep, and I found to my great surprise, that most of the stones at the lowest point had fewer marks of having been exposed to fire, than any others I picked up at a distance.

It is evident to any one when viewing the scene, that the lava must have run over the rim of the hollow for a long time, and then burst its narrow passage on the north side. There are three small cones with extinct craters on their tops, immediately in a line with the southern base of the great one; and another of the same description is to the north.

Two little torrents which watered the valley were lost when the eruption took place; but they may be now seen rushing out of the ground four miles west of the volcano, clear as crystal, and at a temperature of 104°; I bathed in one, to get rid of the cinder dust, and the sun was so oppressive, that the heat of the water was by no means disagreeable to my feelings.

The only other lofty crater of the singularly volcanic territory of Mexico to which I ascended, was that of the Nevada of Toluca, 15,159 feet above the ocean, and rather less than 7000 feet above the city from which it is named. Our party rode through the pine woods which cover its sides to within

2000 feet of the peak, when all vegetation ceased; and being on the northern side, we found snow filling up all the interstices of the loose fragments of rock.

It was rather amusing, when we got off our horses, to be obliged to climb up steeps almost knee-deep in snow, in the latitude of only nineteen degrees north, and in the month of August; but the Indian who guided us being, as usual, without shoes or stockings, soon got heartily tired of the business, and sitting down, allowed us to go on without him. The summit we found was porphyry, and in so decomposed a state, that it crumbled to the touch; which, in addition to its dangerous steepness and frequent coatings of frozen snow, effectually prevented our getting within a hundred feet of the highest point.

We had quitted our horses just as the sun was rising; and while scrambling up the last heights had a fine view of the country below, then of the seas of vapour which veiled all lower objects, and lastly of the misty clouds as they rolled up the gigantic mountain: the mercury of my thermometer sank below the freezing point, and the wind was piercingly cold; we soon ran down the 1500 feet of small loose stones to the bottom of the crater, where we found a large sheet of water with a small conical hill rising from its centre.

The crater of this ancient volcano cannot be

less than two leagues in circumference at its top; and never have I been so fatigued, as in working my way up its steep sides on hands and knees in order to get out. It is remarkable, that no stones which seem to have been exposed to the action of fire, no volcanic remains whatever, can be found within the crater or near the summit of this mountain.

The Indians have no tradition that the Nevada of Toluca has been in activity; but assert that dreadful eruptions were taking place from Popocatepetl, when their ancestors migrated from the eastward; that is, 181 B. C.

About forty miles west of Tlalpujahua is a mountain named San Andreis, whose highest point being bare of trees, I should suppose has an elevation of 13,000 feet: on one of its ridges, at the height of 9590 feet by my barometer, is a small lake so strongly impregnated with sulphur, that it bubbles up to the surface, and makes the water quite warm.

The rocks around also contain much sulphur and alum; the vapour from the holes, and in some places the water of the lake, scalded my hand; and since the revolution, an establishment has been formed which produces a ton of pure sulphur a week by merely evaporating the mud. Not far from the lake is a very hot spring, said to be efficacious in some complaints; and close by is a heap of earth two feet high, like a volcano in miniature,

for it bubbles up with noise, and the sulphureous matter flows over the top.

The manita tree,* so named from the singular formation of its flower, a drawing of which is placed as the frontispiece of this book, is a species of plant almost unknown in the catalogues of botanists. It is sometimes supposed that only three specimens are in existence; two in the small botanical garden at the palace of the city of Mexico, and one at the town of Toluca: it is certain nobody in Mexico can tell from whence they originally came, or where they may be found growing in a wild state; but as they were preserved with many other foreign productions by the emperor Montezuma, it is imagined either himself or ancestors must have obtained them from the interior of South America.

The tree is about forty feet high, with a smooth trunk, without branches almost to the top; but the boughs then stretch over a considerable distance, with large leaves and numerous flowers hanging downwards from amongst the foliage: it bears a stronger resemblance to the plane or the tulip-tree, than any others we are acquainted with in Britain.

These trees, or at least two of them, were found by the Spaniards at the time of their conquest, and form a solitary exception to the truly Gothic devastations of those adventurers; most probably

* Manita means a little hand.

because Cortez occupied the site of the palace for his own residence, and therefore coveted the shade of its garden: the smaller plant now growing at Mexico is considered to have been a sucker from the other; and it struck me when I was admiring the tree and getting its flowers for my collection, that it might easily be propagated by means of the shoots from its roots. Tradition states, that though the Indians did not actually worship the manita tree; yet they regarded the flower with a sort of religious veneration.

Eight miles beyond the river Bolsas, and about eighteen south of the town of Huetamo, is an isolated hill of a conical form, entirely composed of iron; some pieces of which I brought away. The magnetic power of this mass is very extraordinary; for although it neither pulled the bridle from the ears of my horse, nor the shoes from his feet, it had a very attractive effect on my compass.

When I had the pleasure of meeting Captain Lyon near Vera Cruz, in November, 1826, he recommended me by all means to visit the ravine of Somelohuacan below the ridges at Perote, because it was the most extraordinary dell he had witnessed in the whole course of his travels; I also thought the fatigue of zig-zagging down a path for two hours, and subsequent ascent of a similar nature, was amply recompensed by the romantic beauties of the scenery: but the barránca (gulley) of Malinaltinango, ninety miles south-south-west of

the city of Mexico on the path to Zacualpan, was much more interesting from the peculiar novelty of the scene.

As I was riding over an extensive and hot plain, flat and uncultivated as they usually are, I suddenly came to the brink of a precipice, down which I looked with perfect astonishment. A small stream, when swollen by the torrents from the Nevada of Toluca, had gradually worn away the soft rock of the soil; the sides were almost perpendicular, and not a quarter of a mile apart; I think I could almost have shot a bird across the cleft: the depth was 1042 feet; and the getting over this singular obstruction, although the path was good, occupied one hour and a quarter of strenuous exertion.

A circumstance witnessed in this glen, is one among many other proofs of the fallacious tendency of such theoretical systems as are founded rather upon what the inventor thinks Nature ought to do, than on what she really does. The bottom of the cleft is 4712 feet above the sea, or 2365 feet below the city of Mexico, and yet a large group of pine trees are flourishing on its rocks.

Close to the magnificent hacienda of Regla, the torrent falls over basaltic pillars about forty feet in height; and on each side rise similar columns, of perhaps 120 feet elevation, supported on a strata of earth or soft stone, which has not the slightest appearance of volcanic origin.

In the plain of El Grande, at the foot of the Real del Monte range, can be picked up very many varieties of obsidian, green and black, streaked and spotted; but I only once met with rocks of the same substance, and that was on the northern slopes of the mountain San Andreis, in the state of Valladolid.

Near the church of Guadalupe, three miles and a half north of Mexico, is a well impregnated with sulphur; a small hill washed by the lake has its earth so much saturated with soda, that salt for the use of the capital is extracted from it. In the vicinity of the city of Valladolid are several hot and tepid springs; and at the village of Etuquaro, in a deep hollow, two sources flow out of a limestone rock within a few inches of each other, one quite warm, the other cold.

I have heard of some other natural curiosities existing in the Mexican Republic; and no doubt there must be many quite unknown to the generality of the natives themselves; but I am by no means desirous of commencing with the *on dits* of a people who are in the habit of affirming a thing to be a fact one day, for the express purpose of denying it the next.

CHAP. XIV.

CUSTOMS AND MANNERS OF THE PEOPLE.

"Well, what are the Mexicans about?" demanded a king of Spain of his favourite, who had just returned from the viceroyalty. "They are ringing bells and firing rockets, as usual, Sire; they were doing so when I went, all the time I was there, and will continue the same to the end of the chapter. They are good and peaceable subjects, and will never give your majesty any trouble, unless deprived of the above gratifying and intellectual amusements."

It would have been impossible to give a more concise or truer description of the national energies, than is contained in the above reply; as all persons will testify, who have had the misfortune to go to that country, and be deafened or have their heads distracted with the incessant noise of bell-metal and gunpowder.

If the Mexicans had only introduced chimes, or a ring of bells toned and musical as in England, the eternal clamour might perhaps be bearable; but so far from such being the case, there are commonly seen in each steeple two bells, a

larger and smaller, which are turned over and over on a pivot, while men stationed there keep beating the outsides with heavy clubs, and boys, by means of cords, are pulling the clappers with furious violence. I can assure my readers that the sound is tremendous, and unlike any thing they ever heard or can possibly imagine. Let them add to this infernal din, the firing of small rockets and reports of petards every time the Hoste is elevated, and at certain other parts of the religious ceremonies; and then they will join me in opinion, either that the people are afraid *their* Supreme Being is taking a nap, and must be awakened,* or that the custom was originally introduced as a piece of state policy to increase the consumption of the royal monopoly of gunpowder.

In the city of Mexico, the legislative body having found their own quiet smoking of cigars and deliberative cogitations seriously inconvenienced, have put some limits to the practice of bell-baiting, appropriating only a certain number of hours daily to that popular species of enjoyment; but in the other towns and villages, the music still rages with indefatigable fury. After the mass and markets of Sundays, the Indians and labouring classes are seen reeling homewards with their weekly supply of rockets and powder, for various sacred and ex-

* "Either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awakened."
1 *Kings*, xviii. 27.

hilarating occasions; and those articles are purchased in preference to others usually considered more indispensably necessary.

Three times a day, at noon, the morning, and at sun-set, the church bells toll slowly for a few minutes, when each person stops, uncovers his head, and is supposed to repeat a short prayer in behalf of the souls of the dead. There is something so sublime and imposing in this custom, that even the mechanical indifference with which it is observed, cannot make it ridiculous.

The national habits of dress are remarkable for their slovenly, dirty, and beggarly appearance; but these very circumstances rather increase than diminish the picturesque effect of those *sketches* which are painted and published for the edification of John Bull. The elegant costume of the more wealthy cavaliers of the city of Mexico I have already alluded to, and do not now speak of. Those who can afford to wear what we should call boots, ought to lace them up on the outside; but as that would require too much trouble, the laces are thrown away, the leather hangs down over the inner ancles, and the facility of walking is very much impeded. The breeches are left open at the knees, though furnished with a large supply of buttons; and stockings are not known, except to a few privileged classes.

The shirts of those who have one, most often serve by their rents to expose more of a dirty

skin, than even of discoloured linen; a bandana, or some kind of European handkerchief, is wrapped round the head, and only removed when the fascinating occupation of killing its tenantry can be indulged in. In short, boots, breeches, and hat, might be advantageously changed with an English scarecrow.

The serape, however, is the great curse of the Mexicans, the bane of industry, and the conserver as well as propagator of infectious diseases; it is made like an oblong blanket, with a slit in the centre to put the head through; and is among the mass of the people almost invariably of a sombre dark colour.

This cloak is usually worn wrapped round the body, hanging down behind as far as the joints of the knees, with one end thrown over the left shoulder, so as to cover the mouth and nose. It is in fact the Roman toga, which sounds so well in reading, and gives such graceful ideas of drapery, and the Lord knows what; but which, in sober truth, was just such another wretched substitute for every comfort and convenience as the Mexican serape.

When the sun shines hot, the inhabitants cover themselves up to the eyes to keep out its rays; when the chilly mornings and evenings make the cold more piercing from the intense heat of the day, the serape is again made use of, to keep its owner warm; but in either case, so long as this

cloak is not thrown off, no kind of work or exertion can be undertaken.

As they are never cleaned, and are frequently handed down from father to son for several generations, their filthy state does not require any very minute inspection to be made apparent; and, as they serve for bed clothes at night as well as covering during the day, there is always a most unpleasant effluvia hanging about them. To inherit one of these woollen articles from a man who died of a fever; to continue for a short time by a sick bed when shrouded in one of them; to carry a corpse to the grave, exposed as the dead are on a couch; are almost certain sources of contagion. It is well known, that the Turks keep alive the germ of the plague, by the rich and magnificent dresses which become the heir-loom of a family; and I have myself no doubt, but that the celebrated Pandora's box, which afflicted humanity with so many evils, was merely a legacy of the "well-saved" garments of a venerated ancestor.

The priests of Mexico wear a black skull-cap in the house; and when walking, a shovelled hat of such enormous dimensions, that it resembles a trough in size, and in shape is much like one of those wafers we eat with ice cream. The friars go bare-headed, or with a hood like old women; some have black gowns to the heels, others white; a third set move about in sackcloth, and a rope round

the middle; and the whole form the most grotesque and odd-looking group imaginable.

Throughout the whole country, the people go armed; those who can afford it, never stir without a sword, and a sharp-pointed knife stuck in the bota of deer-skin; and the poorer sort carry a stout stick, in addition to the knife which is concealed up the sleeve. In travelling with a servant, the latter is ragged enough, but carries a musket.

It is not the custom to give dinners, but the few I have partaken of with Creoles of the best class, consisted of two or three thin soups tasting strongly of garlic, meat of several kinds and much overdone, good white bread of wheaten flour, white beans swimming in lard, and a variety of well-made sweetmeats. The wine was from Europe; either a rough kind of red from Catalonia, strong sherry, or the inferior claret of France. Blue and white earthenware, with knives and forks from England, were produced on these occasions.

The domestic scenes of discomfort amongst the Creoles out of the cities, with very few exceptions indeed, are such as are highly revolting to the feelings of an Englishman. Four walls white-washed, an opening for a window, with a shutter but no glass, a mattress thrown on some boards in one corner, two or three low, long, narrow, rush-bottomed seats, a rough-made table, half a dozen brown jars to stew their victuals in, and a floor of

bricks or plaster, compose the interior arrangements of almost all the houses.

Some few have the white-wash relieved by a coloured border of paint, or miserable daubs hung up as paintings of saints; many have no mattress, and no other opening to admit the light than the door itself: but all are equally spit over; for as both sexes smoke cigars, they must get rid of the saliva, and are too idle to walk to the door.

The Creoles, if not gambling, generally retire to bed before ten o'clock, and in the morning have a cup of chocolate, with some sweet biscuits, served to them before rising; a little water is then brought and poured slowly over the hands, which sometimes convey a drop of the liquid to the eyes and the mouth; but the teeth and nails are left to themselves, and shaving takes place only every fifth or sixth day.

The labouring classes are very early risers; for as they lie down in their clothes with no other covering than the serape, they have only to rub their eyes, yawn, pull the cloak over their shoulders, and the whole toilette is finished.

Baron Humboldt says with great truth, that the lower classes live almost entirely on vegetable diet; but he does not mention what that diet is, leaving it to the imagination to picture peas and potatoes and cauliflowers, and all the most agreeable and succulent species of fruits. The fact is,

they live chiefly on the flour of maize made into a sort of pancake called tortilla, having a thick sauce of Chile pepper, lard, and garlic, spread over it; and their drink is pulque, or what is still more intoxicating, a hot fiery species of brandy.

The mode in which they prepare the maize for tortillas is of so primitive a nature, that I think it must be the same as adopted in the time of Sarah. The corn is placed on a hard smooth stone, having a slight degree of concavity, and a woman on her knees then takes and crushes it with a smaller stone, blowing away the chaff with her breath, and frequently dipping the left hand into a pan of water to sprinkle the flour.

As soon as sufficient is thus ground, and it is a most tedious operation, the flour is kneaded into a number of small balls; each of which is patted backwards and forwards between the two hands till it attains the consistency of a Scotch oatcake, when being very slightly warmed over the wood embers, it is eaten. This daily and almost incessant labour if there are many mouths to feed, falls on the poor females; the Spaniards never having introduced a hand-mill, or any other mode of grinding the maize, during a series of three hundred years. I rather liked these tortillas when toasted crisp; but as I knew the way in which they were patted by hands not always delicately clean, I took care not to eat the two or three top cakes of a series. Paints, whiting, cements, are all ground in

the same manner; and the powder is thus procured extremely fine.

The manner in which the Creoles receive each other and strangers, is with an overpowering politeness which they scarcely even pretend possesses a single spark of sincerity: they embrace on each side, throwing the arms round the neck and shoulder first one way and then the other, good-naturedly striking the back with the open palm; they place every thing they have at the disposal of the new comer, wishing he may live a thousand years; but unhappy is the indiscreet person who takes them at their word, he then finds a cold reception and nothing else. "A la disposicion de usted" is as well understood in the new Republic, as "not at home" is in England.

I remember one day meeting the Cura with two of his retinue, riding with a cigar between his teeth, and mounted on a remarkably fine horse with the Cortez caparison of chain armour hanging over its haunches; I praised his animal, and he began, "á la disp——" but suddenly recollecting I was a matter-of-fact sort of person, he stopped short in his speech; and I laughingly begged him to proceed, as I should not expect him to give me the horse. This Cura was a very generous man in some trifles, notwithstanding all his bad qualities.

The poorest and middling sort of people are there as polite to each other as French beggars. They always take off the hat on meeting, and

make such inquiries as the following: "How do you do?" "How did you pass the night?" "How is your little wife?" "How did she pass the night?" "How are your pretty little children?" "How did they pass the night?"

Diminutives are continually made use of in the Spanish language, in order more clearly to evince affectionate regard; and it certainly adds very much to the sweetness of conversation: they are formed by adding *ito*, *ita*, to the end of words; thus in speaking of a lady, if you say Señorita, it implies every species of commendation; and a man should be very careful how he addresses even an old woman as Señora only.

Huts are almost always guarded by a dozen curs; as though the natives will not hesitate to stab a Christian, they will by no means kill a dog; the brutes will run out a long distance to bite your horses heels; but if you turn and show symptoms of fight, they will sneak back as quickly as they advanced.

One of the favourite habits of the great mass of the community in Mexico, not only in the hot country where the sun overpowers the inhabitants with lassitude, but also in the mountainous regions where the thermometer often sinks below the freezing point, is killing the vermin in each other's hair. Towards sunset, not a hut is to be found where this employment is not going forward. The men are seen extended on the

ground with their heads on the knees of the women, who with infinite dexterity catch the disagreeable intruders; taking especial care however to kill only a certain number daily, that the recreation may never fail: the lords of the creation will then cleanse the hair of their wives and children in the same manner.

On Saturdays many of the women and girls from the villages go down to the rivulets, and stripping themselves naked except a very short petticoat, sometimes commence washing their garments, their long black hair, and parts of their person: the passing and repassing of workmen or others causes not the slightest interruption in the scene.

I have never witnessed a bull-fight on an extensive scale, or which deserved the name; for the few animals I have seen produced for the purpose were sufficiently tame, and their opponents sufficiently timid, to cause both parties to keep at a most respectful distance from each other: but I have been gratified more than once when riding with Mexican Creoles, by their feats of horsemanship; I have seen them pursue the cattle full gallop, overtake them, stoop, catch the bullock by its tail, and with a dexterous twist at once throw the animal to the ground.

Cock-fighting is one of the most attractive amusements for both sexes, as it enables them to bet and gamble without any bodily exertion: the sun is kept off by means of boughs. Though at all

times a cruel sport, I thought it, as practised in Mexico, a singularly disgusting and uninteresting mode of killing time; for the Mexican breed of cocks is quite of the dunghill kind, and the lancets tied on instead of the natural spurs were sufficiently sharp, generally to settle the combat with a single blow.

To a foreigner, the confusion of sounds between the *x* and the *j*, the *b* and the *v*, the *h* and the *g*, pronounced with a cigar in the mouth, is perplexing to a degree; but the annoyance occasioned by those incessant phrases "poco à poco," and "quien sabe," is quite intolerable. The first is an excuse for every kind of idleness; that it is too hot or too cold, the wind is too high or too slight, it is time for dinner, time for a (siesta) nap, that to-morrow will do just as well. The other means every thing; the precise interpretation depends on the way in which it is drawled out. It is the French shrug, the English knowing wink, the sign of ignorance, of indifference, of doubt. A man, I will undertake to say, might travel throughout the Republic, visiting every person and place worth his attention, without knowing another word of Spanish than *poco à poco, quien sabe, usted,* and *si*;* and that provided he had a constant supply of cigars in his pocket, he should

* *Poco à poco,* means slowly; *quien sabe,* who knows or cares; *usted,* you; *si,* yes.

quit the country with the reputation of being a remarkably well-informed and agreeable companion.

On the few large pieces of water met with in Mexico, the Indians make use of a long shallow boat for the purpose of fishing; which is so narrow that persons unaccustomed to the mode of managing it would immediately lose their balance and get upset. It is formed of the trunk of one tree; and the Indian owners are often seen in the rainy season, covered with an odd-looking cloak made of the broad reeds of the morass, which effectually turns off the wet during the heaviest of storms.

On the great estates for breeding of cattle in the warmer districts, it is usual for the men who pursue them with the lazo through the wildernesses of shrubs, to guard themselves against the thorns of the mimosa trees by means of a mantle of skins which envelopes all but their face: a long cape hangs from each arm, which the riders hold before their eyes when they dash through a thicket; but I once saw two savage-looking fellows, who were galloping fearlessly in every direction although completely naked.

The lazo is a strong cord, or well twisted thong of skin, about thirty or forty feet in length, with a slip-knot at one end, while the other is attached to the pommel of the saddle; and with this noose whirling round and round over his head the Mexican gallops after his object, very rarely

failing to pitch it over any part of the animal he aims at, his own horse plants his feet firmly to resist the shock of the tug, as soon as the lazo has been thrown; and then wheels off to the right or left the more effectually to secure the prey.

Should the head of cattle thus caught prove very violent, another man will let his lazo fall over the neck or fore leg; and then the two will pull the poor creature in different directions till it falls exhausted. If it be a horse that has been thus thrown down, two or three men jump on its body, holding it firmly by the tail and ears, till it is marked with a hot iron, and one of their powerful curb bridles and a saddle has been put on; then as it rises on being loosened, a man mounts its back, keeps his seat in spite of every struggle, urges it round a ring with his great spurs, till at last the animal, wearied to death, becomes obedient and yields, because incompetent any longer to continue the exertion. This is termed breaking in a horse for riding; and in fact they do not undergo more than two or three of the above *disciplinings* for that purpose: but a foolish custom prevails, of covering the eyes of the animal with a band of leather or a handkerchief previous to mounting; and the consequence is, that if not so treated the horse is frequently unmanageable.

As Englishmen always despise every thing which is not done in their own little island, I of course objected to blindfolding my horse; and

very nearly got killed for my folly. Talking to an acquaintance one day, previous to mounting, but with my foot on the stirrup, I received such a kick on the head, that if it had been the fashion of the country to shoe the hind feet of the Rosinantes as well as the fore, the few brains I possess must have been scattered. My companion thinking me dead, rode off to ensure me Christian burial by bribing the Cura; and two Indians picked me up, caught my horse, and so far from robbing me of money or pistols, took every care they could to recover me. When again mounted, I had the satisfaction of meeting those who were coming to look for my corpse; but I thought the worthy priest seemed chagrined at losing his reward.

A good saddle horse for the cities or travelling, is taught what they term the *páso*; which is effected by striking the inside of the knees of the animal when exercising, until it attains a pace between the trot and the canter; a sort of waddle ridiculous enough to look at, but extremely easy and agreeable to the rider. Journeys of twenty miles a day, for weeks together, may thus be accomplished without fatigue.

The Mexican fashion of riding double, is much more gallant than ours; for the lady is seated in front, and the man passes his arms round her waist, not only to secure her from falling but also to guide the horse. They have also a very good practice of covering the saddle whenever they

dismount; as the heat of the sun's rays on the leather is sometimes extremely pernicious to the rider.

When a marriage takes place among the poorer people, a feast is immediately given; which lasts sometimes during several days: the bridegroom provides a guitar and violin, with plenty of pulque and sweet cakes; and his visitors are not expected to come empty handed, though they are allowed to get as drunk as they please.

I once attended the funeral of a respectable Creole; but my nostrils were on that occasion so horribly offended, I never would go to another: I could almost fancy that I smell the poor man at this moment.

The body was placed on a couch, with the neck and face bare, a night-cap on the head; the pillow was white with black stripes; the coverlid black, with a large red cross down the centre. After several prayers, the Cura walked round the bier with incense, and a second time with holy water, muttering some sentences as he sprinkled the bed: four men in red garments then conveyed the corpse to the vault, and we all adjourned to the house of the relations, who are precluded by etiquette from attending the burial; there having heard a prayer or two while some holy water was dashed in our faces with a broom, we bowed and retired.

In a former chapter I have mentioned several of

the vices and dirty habits openly tolerated in Mexican society; but it would fill a volume to particularize even a hundredth part: it is only however since my visit to Mexico I am inclined to subscribe to the truth of a common assertion, that Europe has been afflicted by additional contagious disorders since her intercourse with the American continent.

The descendants of the Spaniards in Mexico pay not the slightest attention to veracity. They do not understand the meaning of "word of honour," but interpret it into words of convenience. In every transaction they will cheat you if possible; making no scruple to deny promises, contracts, loans, or debts.

The lawyers are there quite a different sort of persons from the respectable portion of the profession in England. Confidential queries and acknowledgments to a legal adviser in Mexico, are the most certain means you could adopt of ruining your own affairs; for if there is a doubt, no sooner have you turned your back than the worthy lawyer seeks your adversary, makes his own terms, and betrays the weak points of your cause.

Creoles of title have been more than once caught in the fact, when endeavouring to purloin prints, books, &c., from the shop of a highly respectable European established in the capital; and what was even worse, laughed at their detection as a good joke, instead of being ashamed of their

knavery. But as far as my own experience goes, I must differ from the sweeping accusation of theft so often alleged against all the *lower* classes of Mexicans; for throughout my excursions, I cannot recall to mind a single instance in which any article was stolen from my baggage. It is true I kept my eyes about me; but on some occasions, when half a hundred men, women, and children have been crowding round to listen to a musical snuff-box I used to produce in the hot country, things might have been easily stolen without my knowing it, if the people had been so inclined.

The son of one of the best educated Creoles I have met with, joined with a day-labourer to cheat their employer out of a dollar; and I understood the father exclaimed, on being told of the fact, "What good was it possible my instructions should do, when they were at variance with the example set him by all his companions, and all his neighbours."

A custom which is universal in Mexico, and offensively annoying to Europeans, who never before heard of such a thing, is the demanding of payment beforehand for the articles ordered. Your washerwoman, on taking away the linen, asks for an advance of money to buy soap; the tailor wants cash to purchase the cloth, the thread, the buttons; all do the same, from the highest to the lowest. It is said to have arisen from a convenient

forgetfulness the Spaniards used to be troubled with, that of not paying for articles after they were delivered.

If you purchase or hire a house, mines, or any other thing, the owner insists on the whole or a part of the sum being given him at once. Contract with a man to supply you with timber or cotton; and he ends his agreement with—"Provided you furnish me with such a proportion of the value as may procure the necessary mules and oxen for the conveyance."

It is needless to point out how frequently this enables the other party to cheat you; but the misfortune is, that if you refuse to run the risk, the Mexicans as pertinaciously decline entering into any other arrangement, and consequently you get nothing at all.

Three of us one evening paid a visit to the Cura of the town of Isluaca, because we expected to find assembled for the benefit of the good man's instruction, all the beauty of the neighbourhood; nor were we disappointed. While we sat sipping some lemonade, mixed with frozen snow from the mountain of Toluca, and listening to the priest's asseverations about a little dirty plant with a yellow flower growing wild in his parish, which he said was the tea so much loved by the English, and a most advantageous object for the company's money; two of the fair guests retired from the room. Soon after, a young Italian received a

message that he was wanted; and when he came back, I congratulated him on talking Spanish so fluently, which had evidently captivated the Cura's friends. "I wish the good fortune had fallen to your share," he replied; "for I have already been persuaded to pay a debt of ten dollars, and have promised to bring back from the city what will cost me thirty more."

As we were quitting the house, the same two ladies waylaid us on the stairs; and said, as it was well known to every body that 200 dollars was of no sort of importance to an English company, but would enable themselves to new roof and white-wash their houses; they hoped we would bestow a trifle of that nature on each of them.

I cannot pretend to say what association of ideas makes the following phrase so peculiarly offensive to a Mexican beggar, "*Vaya usted con Dios*"—get along with God; but whenever you do make that reply to their petitions, they are much more angry than an English beggar is with the answer, "Get to the devil."

Strolling players and rope-dancers are sometimes met with in the Republic; their dress and buffoonery being much like those in Britain, only a few degrees lower in the scale. I attended their performances in the yard of a ruined house, where each spectator brought his own seat or sat down on the heaps of rubbish. The music was a drum, clarionet, violin, trumpet, and two guitars; the

curtain, an old serape hung across a corner; the ranting was considerable, and more than two-thirds of it in praise of the Alcalde who had allowed them to act.

On Palm Sunday, a great many of the large leaves of that tree, which have been brought from the hot country on purpose, are blessed by the priest, and then distributed among his parishioners, who eagerly bind them against their balconies or their huts, as a protection from the effects of lightning; and I was told they would also burn a few leaves, and scatter the ashes in the air to appease a storm, which is similar to the practice in Italy. If a man is found murdered, a small heap of stones, with a cross at the top, is placed on the spot; and sometimes I have seen a wooden alcove, containing the skull and a candle, the latter of which is lighted, and the former decorated with flowers, on the anniversary of the deed.

The practice of putting the tails of carriage mules into broad leather bags has a most ludicrous appearance; and the first time I saw long files of pigs standing on their hind legs in the streets of Mexico, I thought it the drollest sight imaginable. When, however, I got near enough to observe they had no heads, I remembered the story of Don Quixote and the wine skins, and found that the pigs were merely bottles to hold pulque.

A muleteer I hired to accompany me on one of my excursions, became so unhappy when his ani-

mal got a sore back from the mountainous paths I chose to follow; that after finding all my persuasions and gifts unable to pacify his lamentations, I said, "the Cura should bless the mule when we got back, and so cure it." "No, sir, whined the man, "the priest can't do that. When my wife had no children, the holy man did indeed bless us with a family; but to cure a mule is quite out of his power."

This poor fellow, who was really a very worthy man, overcome by my solicitations, and by my servant's example, after three weeks' travelling, consented so far to deviate from the established usages of his countrymen, as to wash once. We all caught the ague eventually, and he died; declaring always that I had put him to death, by persuading him to touch cold water on a journey. I gave his widow ten dollars, and dried her tears; but from that day forth, my Mexican servant exhibited a more remarkably shining and dirty-looking skin.

CHAP. XV.

THE INDIANS, AND MODE OF WORKING THE MINES.

I SHALL not venture to contradict Baron Humboldt, who has stated the number of Indians in the vast states of Mexico to be a million, that is, one-sixth part of the whole population; because, if he means only those of pure blood, he is most probably correct; besides, no person can ever hope to visit that country under such singular advantages as the author alluded to; and very few would be willing to take so much pains in collecting and comparing voluminous documents as himself. It is by having attempted so much, and trusted so often to the reports of others, that, notwithstanding the vast mass of valuable and interesting information contained in his volumes, he has gained the appellation among the Europeans in Mexico, of Baron Humbug.

I will appeal to every individual who has travelled through the different states of the Republic, and not *merely* passed from Vera Cruz to the capital; whether nine-tenths of those he has met, did not by their colour, their wretchedness, their cus-

toms and manners, much more nearly assimilate to the Indians than the Creoles.

Frequent the markets of Mexico, Puebla, or any of the other towns and villages; visit the mines, or other large establishments; and if you don't find pure Indians, you will yet observe the same miserable and ignorant beings, united together by the iron bond of degradation and long oppression.

The Creoles themselves are precisely of this way of thinking. Ask an Alcalde, a Cura, or any descendant of the Spaniards, concerning the population of the neighbouring district; and he immediately replies, "of rational creatures we have nine families; but the 'gentes irracionales' are estimated at fifteen thousand." The number, of course, depends upon the part of the country to which the inquiry is directed.

The "free and liberal institutions" of the new Republic are not therefore particularly pleasing to the great mass of the population; they say they "don't understand these oaths and votes and Congresses, continually changing, and for no good purpose; that they have always been accustomed, like their fathers, to obey a king, and they wish one man to be chosen who might govern them as he thinks best."

I have been present at two or three swearings to the last edition of the constitution, and thought the whole business vastly farcical; a tedious prosy document was rehearsed by a "gente racional"

under authority, who with a cigar at the corner of his mouth, seemed to care as little about what he was reading as his auditory; but the national militia had turned out, like Falstaff's ragged regiment, under the expectation of a donation of pulque.

The only decided feeling exhibited on the subject of the national interests, is hostility towards the Spaniards; for there was something in the tyranny of that people more revolting than even frantic cruelty. Gomez's banditti always treated their Spanish prisoners with great barbarity: besides, nearly all the priests are opposed to the Spanish dominion; being at enmity with the monks and friars on that account, as well as most others.

The true Indians of pure descent very rarely live in the towns or larger villages, but on the sides of abrupt hills and secluded valleys, out of sight of the more frequented paths; and they have gained nothing by the revolution except exemption from a slight poll tax. These people refuse to take any part whatever in the election of magistrates and members of Congress; and it is only by giving them a glass of brandy when they come to market, that they can be induced to express an opinion; but they will then vote for any body or any thing, in gratitude for the liquor.

The tribes are numerous though small, differing in features, dress, and language; and excepting a few of those who inhabit the mountains near the metropolis, they seem devoid of that courage and

ferocity which is generally attached to our ideas of savage life; they are timid and sullen, melancholy, or perhaps I ought to say apathetic. Some wear their black hair hanging over their eyes and faces, so as to give them a most wild and forbidding appearance; but I can speak from experience, that when not infuriated by intoxication, the traveller has nothing to fear either from their insults or their attacks.

It would certainly be imprudent to trust too far to the forbearance of the Indians, by going among them unarmed; and yet their dexterity in throwing a stick or a stone is so great, that had they been naturally of a vicious disposition, some violent outrages must have taken place. In regard to their acquirements, degraded as the Creoles are, the aborigines have *now* become ten times worse; for they absolutely have no further perceptible ideas than eating, drinking, sleeping, and worshipping an image.

I must make an exception in favour of cunning, for which quality they display a laudable partiality; and nothing could be more satisfactory, than the manner in which some of the miners contrived for several weeks to evade paying the Cura his tax of threepence on each dollar of wages. As there were two pay-tables on a Sunday to settle the weekly disbursements, they took notice how the work-lists were usually distributed, and then divided their labour so as to receive less than a dollar from each

cashier. At length "holy mother church" found them out; and furious at such gross impiety, took effectual measures to prevent a recurrence of their profligate conduct.

The women, as is the case among all savage or half-civilized communities, are treated with great harshness, and have to work much more than the men; they most frequently carry home the weekly provisions after the public mass has been said in the market-place, are often kicked and beat by the stronger sex, and pant under a heavy load and a hot sun, while their husbands reel forwards with nothing but a guitar in their hands. But let not the mention of this instrument give rise to ideas of music and mirth and happiness; the only notion an Indian has of harmony, is to run his fingers over the strings, which produces a noise, and with that sound he is satisfied from year's end to year's end.

The Roman Catholic clergy have always been much greater adepts at gaining converts than any other description of missionaries; therefore they never attempted effectually to root out the idolatrous superstitions of the natives of Spanish America, but only destroyed the figures of wood and stone, in order the more easily to turn the worship of the Indians towards representations of the cross and of saints; at least, such is the only reason I can give for the existence of ceremonies like the following, which must surely have been handed down from the days of Montezuma, though the sea-

son and the meaning of the observance have been somewhat changed.

On August 15th, which was kept as a great festival, in honour of the Virgin Mary's reception into heaven, I went to the village church, where I was informed certain religious rites were that anniversary to be performed; for, as these holy dramas bring in a considerable revenue, the priests very properly enact them turn and turn about. After high mass, a sermon, and suitable well-made fireworks, ten Indians of both sexes dressed in white vests and trowsers, but ornamented with scarfs, handkerchiefs, and small red and white feathers on their heads, entered the church amid a crowd of spectators. Each carried in the right hand a small gourd or box filled with pebbles, which by continual shaking kept up a rattling noise; while the left hands grasped square battledores, also adorned with red and white feathers. Two other Indians with well executed and hideous masks over their faces, acted as the kings of misrule during the fête; driving back the crowd with blows of a cudgel, and directing the dancing of the rest: to these worthies I presented a dollar, and was forthwith handed through the mob to the best place, namely the altar itself.

The first ten formed two and two down the middle of the church, and approached the altar in a dance; lifting their knees very high, striking their feet sharply against the ground, turning

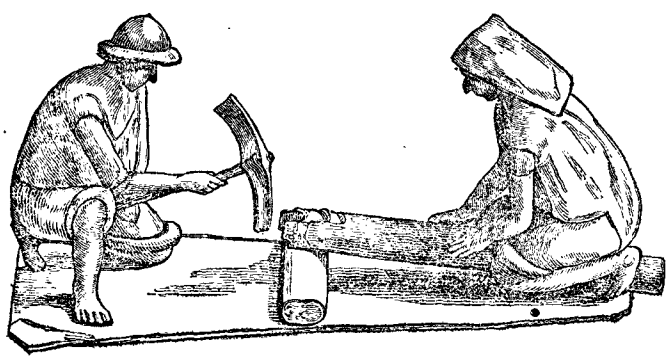
round each other and changing places, rattling their gourds, waving their plumaged battledores, and always bending the knee to the altar when their movements brought them to the top of the set: they next lifted a young girl on a stool above their heads, where she danced and knelt for some minutes; and one of the chiefs of the revels put the stuffed imitation of some animal on his shoulders, and then butted at all those who were near him.

There was nothing at all indecorous in the exhibition, except the sacredness of the place chosen. In the village were collected together all the inhabitants of the environs, like a fair; only nothing but pulque, cakes, sweetmeats, and a few bad fruits were sold to the bystanders. Amid this large assembly of very ugly people, I observed one woman with red hair; a solitary instance among the natives of Mexico, as far as I know to the contrary.

It is singular that the Aztec and most of the other Indian tribes, should have settled themselves on the high ridges of the central country where the climate is subject to severe cold; as from the peculiar features and colour of their descendants, it would seem certain the migration took place from a hot region. Except the few Sambos or progeny of negroes on the immediate coasts, there are none of the Mexicans so very dark as those of the miscalled 'Table Land;' and in respect to ugliness, and shortness of stature, they remain unrivalled in the Republic.

Several of the earliest Spanish writers after the conquest, mention the Tariscan Indians, who inhabited the territory near lake Patzquaro, as being eminently mild and industrious in their habits; and speak of their various arts and manufactures in a strain of commendation, which proves them to have excelled their conquerors in most of the attributes of civilization: Spanish rule and Spanish example have done wonders in destroying nearly all traces of their former acquirements; but fortunately nature has still preserved in them an aptitude for imitation.

When we first arrived in the country we found blacksmiths who could make a heavy shoe for a horse, iron bars and wedges for mining, and could even tip the latter with steel as well as sharpen it to a point; the masons were good and excelled in cement; the carpenters seemed totally unacquainted with any other instruments than the hatchet and an adze.



The preceding figure of Mexican carpenters, and the following illustrations of the process of mining and amalgamation, are scrupulously copied from some small silver figures which I purchased in the city of Mexico, and were made by an Indian: they therefore show the present proficiency of the natives in the arts of designing and modelling.

It may be, that the Spaniards themselves are ignorant of such extraordinary inventions as the saw, the plane, the auger; and yet I have seen the painting of a martyr, who was tied between boards and then sawed down the middle. Carpenters in Mexico however, cut down a tree of large dimensions; and then by dint of the most praiseworthy perseverance, contrive to chip away both sides of the trunk so as to form one plank.

The dexterity with which they used the adze, and their nicety of eye and hand in smoothing a board, were quite surprising; and the European artizans had not established their workshops more than four months, before many of the natives could not only use every instrument in the chest, but actually made me the frames of several windows when they had witnessed the finishing of one model.

Those Indians who gain their livelihood by supplying the markets, take up their light wicker baskets, which are often five feet high by two and a half wide; and filling the compartments with fowls, eggs, fruits, &c. suspend them over the

back by means of a broad leather band across the forehead; and thus start for the town. With this enormous pannier projecting almost three feet above the head, barefooted or perhaps with sandals, and a stout stick in his hand, the Indian *trots* along at an even pace with his toes well turned inwards, totally careless whether he journies one day or three provided his articles for sale do not get spoilt.

As this race of people always go on foot, and are accustomed to carry heavy burthens, their legs are extremely stout, their backs very strong; but their arms are almost invariably disproportionately weak: they are just the reverse in appearance of many of our English agricultural labourers; who from the habit of wearing thick heavy shoes, have often fine persons and brawny arms supported on a pair of spindle shanks which seem borrowed from another body.

The Indians have a strong natural aversion to labour, and they will never work unless watched, or under a system I will presently explain; yet it is remarkable how much they will perform in their own slow and inefficient modes.

Each mining district of any importance has a resident deputy from the college of mines; chosen annually, and vested with powers which in some cases supersede all other authority. Thus if a man who is in the employment of miners is arrested for any offence, the deputy can insist on the magis-

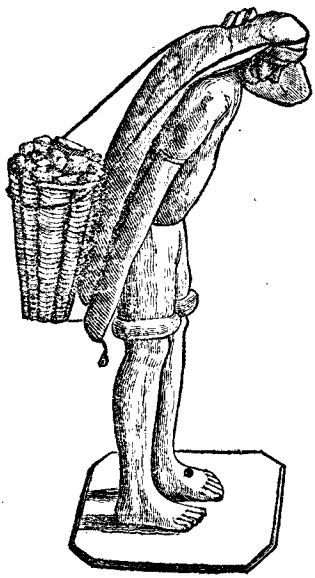
trate sending the culprit to work during the day, and only allow him to be imprisoned at night: so precise were the royal ordinances in favour of a department of industry which is almost the only real source of wealth in the country; the *only one* which enables the inhabitants to pay for European goods, or furnish a revenue.

The veins of silver were no doubt originally discovered by fires being accidentally lighted on spots where the ore "cropped out" on the surface; and some portion of metal became smelted and seen: adventurers then began to sink a shaft; or much more commonly to dig a hole in the vein itself, following the richer lodes in all their sinuosities, groping about sometimes above, sometimes below, but leaving nothing behind that was worth taking away.

I have heard many professional European miners declare, that no workings could be carried on more devoid of all system than those of the Mexicans; and yet in despite of all the very best of theories, the ignoramuses had contrived to extract the precious contents.

The Indians were not precisely treated as slaves, but certain rights were always exercised over them in regard to mining, which obliged a certain proportion of labourers to be furnished in each district, and to work at reduced wages. They were in truth hewers of wood and drawers of water; and obliged in addition to the ore, to carry out

the mud and other refuse in skin sacks, or sometimes wicker baskets, on their backs.



Whether I am correct or not in the conjecture I cannot say; but I have often thought when visiting the old narrow winding excavations of the natives, that men were capable of going further under ground in that pure atmosphere without a circulation of air than in denser climates: fire damps are, I believe, unknown, and wherever a candle will burn, there the air is not so much stagnated as to prevent breathing.

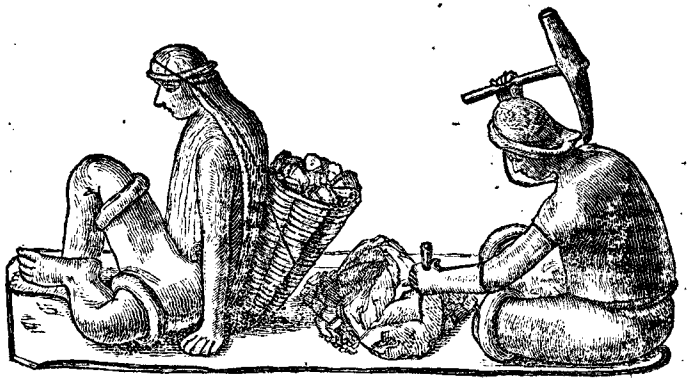
When the workmen arrive at the opening of the shafts or levels they strip entirely, except a cloth

round the middle; then signing the cross, each takes a candle, and they commence a shrill dissonant hymn to the Virgin, which gradually becomes softened and pleasing as they recede from the surface. Certain regulations are strictly adhered to with reference to the relieving of the labourers, or allowing them to quit the enclosed space above, except at stated periods; a measure of precaution to prevent the purloining of the richer ore.

Very few fronts are so wide as to admit more than two men abreast, but the vein can be attacked in many places at once; and to insure the industry of the miners the system of task work is adopted, with the addition of a certain proportion of all rich ore they may dig out: it is likewise much more economical in the end, to make them a certain allowance for finding themselves with candles and gunpowder.

If the shaft is perpendicular, a large wooden drum turned by horses raises to the surface a sort of sack made of three great skins firmly sewed together and filled with water; for the use and mode of making tubs with staves is utterly unknown, and there are very few mines which have a level deep enough to drain a third part of their galleries. While this is going forward, the carriers work their way to the surface by means of notched poles put across a part of the shaft in a zigzag fashion; and they then give their load to the

breakers, who knock the ore into pieces exactly as if they were going to macadamize a road.



The quantity brought "to grass" by each individual would appear ridiculously small to those who are unacquainted with the difficulties of the low underground passages, and the fatigue of mounting several hundred feet of notched sticks; but it is the long established usage of the natives, and can only be got rid of by degrees, even in those mines where the shafts will allow of a bucket.

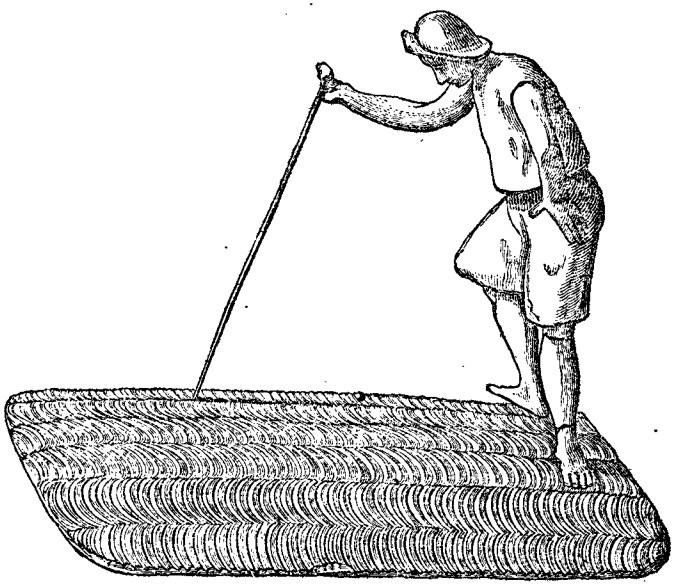
A well-regulated establishment ought to have selectors of ore quite distinct from the breakers, to point out what is worth undergoing the additional expenses of amalgamation; but to this plan all the Mexican proprietors will of course object most strenuously, and insist upon sending every description of ore to the manufactory. Many excellent Europeans are also of opinion, that whatever is good for the native owner, must be advantageous for both parties; but I am of quite a different way

of thinking. If I sow three bushels of wheat, and only reap two bushels, and am then obliged to give one of those bushels of produce to another person, it seems clear to me that I lose two bushels, and the other party gains one by the bargain.

At the manufactory the ore is ground, or else pounded very fine under stampers, and then placed on an area most frequently open to the weather, but preferable if covered from the rain and cold; it is there wetted and mixed with certain proportions of salt and burnt pyrites, which vary in quantity on every occasion, and can only be known from long experience. This mud, which strongly

resembles the scrapings of London streets, is well trodden and mixed together by men or horses; quicksilver is then squeezed through a fine cloth all over the heap, and the mass is again turned over and kicked about for a long succession of

days. Thus, according to circumstances of the state of the atmosphere and various other causes, the mud remains from three to six weeks before it is fit to be washed; then it is put into a cistern of



water, well stirred up, and allowed to run very gently down a long inclined plane or trough, as represented in the figure. The quicksilver having

united itself with the minute particles of the precious metal, they are together heavy enough to sink and collect at the stops on the board, while the refuse dirt is carried off with the water.

The greater portion of the mercury is got back, by pressing the mass obtained from the washing; and the rest, except a certain loss which must occur, is obtained by sublimation, leaving pure silver behind.

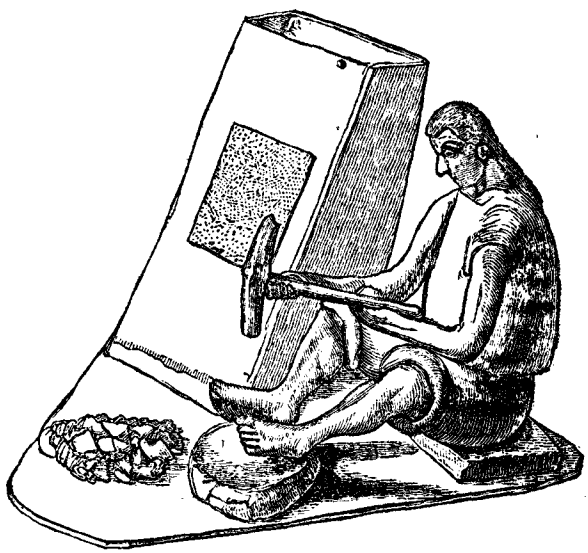
As the great mass of Mexican mine proprietors had not manufactories of their own, they were obliged to send their ore to be amalgamated by other persons; paying them a fixed sum for a given quantity, and all the additional expenses of salt, pyrites, and mercury. It must therefore be evident, without my entering into prolix details, that the owner of the manufactory had very numerous opportunities of cheating the miner; and that all the energies of the latter were continually exercised to prevent his being very grossly robbed.

The one would damp his salt, only half burn his pyrites, put bullets into the quicksilver to increase the weight, and by carelessly washing the mud, gain a handsome profit from the refuse carried off. The miner, on the other hand, would calculate to an incredible nicety what each quantity of the ore sent ought to yield in silver.

The Germans, who added a great deal of economy in their arrangements to much practical experience in silver ores, found on trial that many of the processes adopted in their native country would not succeed in Mexico, and they very wisely gave up all such unproductive innovations and experiments immediately; satisfied with having as-

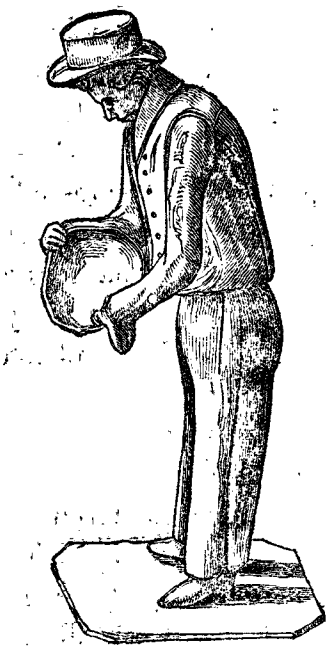
certained the *fact*, without obstinately insisting that nature ought to have made all climates alike.

Every German with whom I have conversed in the Republic, admitted candidly, that in judgment of the value of ores, in all processes of amalgamation, in shrewdness, and in those details they were accustomed to, the Mexicans were at least equal, if not superior to the Europeans; but that the great defect of their system, was in not endeavouring to concentrate the riches of a vast mass of ore into a small compass by means of "percussion tables," before they commenced so tedious and expensive an operation as amalgamation.



The Mexican smelting furnaces are tolerably well arranged, the blast being driven by a column

of water according to the European improvements; but the Germans introduced new fluxes; and by means of the "percussion washing tables," and small establishments of management, they have, I am told, almost superseded the use of amalgamation, and have already sent net remittances to Europe.



An Overseer trying the quality of the Amalgam.

CHAP. XVI.

CONDUCT OF THE SPANIARDS.

After having thus recalled to my recollection a variety of thoughts which occupied my mind while I resided in the country; after having referred constantly to notes written on the spot; and after having so unreservedly expressed my disgust at the present state of society, morality, integrity, education, and the filthy manners and customs of the people; what am I irresistibly compelled to declare is the result of all my reflections? That the Mexicans *are* what the Spaniards have made them; that Mexico shows no other signs of civilisation except its vices.

When Napoleon first entered the Spanish territory, a celebrated statesman with him is reported to have exclaimed, "Sire, you are now quitting Europe for Africa!" and, assuredly, notwithstanding their bigotted prejudices, they have more African blood in their veins, than of that of either their Roman or Gothic conquerors.

I know not why it has been the fashion to speak of the "proud and noble Spaniard." If we consult

our own history, we shall find, for a long succession of ages, that the high-minded race have treated English subjects with vindictive and atrocious barbarity, whenever they thought it could be done with impunity; that they have acted towards our government with duplicity and open breach of faith, when under the rule of a weak prince; and have as invariably crouched and craved for mercy, when chastised by a firmer assertor of his country's rights.

If we examine the histories of foreign countries, we shall see the fact recorded, that wherever the Spaniards have had dominion, and their blood been intermingled, the use of the knife, assassination, and all the vices of the worst passions of the human mind, have been notoriously prevalent.

It would be needless to cite Naples and Sicily as proofs of the truth of my assertion, because nobody will dispute the fact as far as relates to them; but it is not so generally known, that among the lowest classes of Bruxelles and all Belgium, the knife is very commonly made use of to settle disputes.

It is, however, a still fairer criterion of their just claim to the nobler virtues, to take their own history; and what does it teach us? That the only period when the arts, poetry, music, chivalrous gallantry, and the intellectual acquirements of mankind, have flourished in Spain, was when the Moors governed the country as masters; and when the few who

dared call themselves Spaniards, concealed themselves as banditti or guerrillas in the fastnesses of the northern mountains.

If the Moors did not entirely root out the remnant, it was because, as in the case of our own Welsh, the stronger nation did not seriously covet bleak and unprofitable wastes; and so far from fearing the petty warfare continually carried on, looked upon it as a good school for the brave, a harmless employment for the turbulent.

When, however, the French under Charles Martel had brought a signal destruction on the Moors, and their own divisions and sanguinary disputes had completed their weakness; then, after a lapse of nine hundred years, the Spaniards once more gained an ascendancy in their native land.

And how did this "high-minded and noble" nation preserve their treaty and their faith with a people, who, Spanish writers assure us, had ruled *them* with justice and clemency during nine centuries? They broke the treaty in every particular; and by executions, confiscations, and banishments, drove out the larger number of the most industrious inhabitants, converting the garden of their country into an uncultivated and thinly populated waste.

The successor of that prince who had so acted, being also elected Emperor of Germany, was enabled to advance the Spanish monarchy to the first rank among the kingdoms of Europe; but his son

being no longer at the head of the Germans, and having by his bigotry established the Inquisition and lost Holland, Spain, left to herself and her own energies, has from that day been considered a power of the second class.

Let me however return to the conduct displayed by the "proud and noble Spaniard" in the American provinces.

A gentleman who held a prominent station in the late Constitutional Cortes, assured me that there was no law existing in Spain which excluded the Mexicans from holding any and every employment under the crown; and I am far from disbelieving that fact, because he is much too well informed to be ignorant on the subject, and much too honourable wilfully to deceive. But let me ask, whether it is not quite possible to deprive a particular class in the community of the privileges of their fellow-subjects, without any legal enactment being passed to take away those advantages? It is currently asserted throughout the new Republic, that such *was* the practical tenour of the existing regulations under the Mexican viceroys; and if any confidence whatever can be placed in the speeches and writings of such a people, there must have been some foundation for these repeated complaints.

I have heard it over and over again affirmed, that during the long series of years they were under the Spanish dominion, not one hundred native individuals were promoted to situations of

authority and profit: unless perhaps the period immediately preceding the revolution shall be admitted as affording a contradiction to the declaimer.

Among the monks and friars and monastic establishments, only Spaniards were advanced to stations of dignity and influence. The same was the case with the bishoprics and church hierarchy; and I have already mentioned in my account of the war of independence, the rancorous hatred existing between the regular and secular clergy on that very subject; but the Mexicans go farther, and declare, that not even a door-keeper to any of the public institutions, or any other office under the government, however menial, was given to a native if a Spaniard could be found to fill it.

If there be any Spaniard who shall think it for the credit of his country, that the above vexatious system shall be shown never to have existed; he had better give the names of the Creoles employed, the years when, and the stations they held; then the Mexicans may, if they choose, prove him to be misinformed; but for my part, I am perfectly satisfied that both the parent and child are so utterly worthless, I shall beg leave to decline taking any further interest in the discussion.

I can only judge the Spaniards by history, by those I have met with in Mexico, by the degrading state of ignorance and misery to which they have reduced the people of that country; and by re-

flections on the flourishing account Cortez gives in his letters to Charles the Fifth, of the arts, manufactures, power, and civilization of Montezuma's empire at the time of the conquest.

I have met however several Englishmen who have been much in Spain; and who, after describing to me that "high-minded race" as a nasty, bigoted, garlick-eating, lazy set; as men who would not fight in open warfare, but showed the ferocity of the tiger when they could pounce on their prey from a rock or an ambush; after this tirade of commendation, have wound up the whole with, "but still the Spaniards are a fine set of men taken individually."

How are we to account for this singular species of infatuation, unless it is a remnant of those principles instilled into our minds *at school;* where the aspiring boy is most zealously taught to admire those qualities above all others, which our religion and our nature most strenuously urge us to abhor and to shun.

We are *there* told to applaud, and to imitate, if occasion permits, the conduct of "parents who order their children to execution—patriots who display their virtue by stabbing their benefactors—heroes who fight bravely when they know themselves invulnerable—chiefs who prove their wisdom by deceiving all who put confidence in them—republics which exhibit their freedom by putting to death those who defended them—gods who were

justly worshipped for their power, because they seduced all the wives and daughters in their vicinity."

If we really ought to admire such bright examples as the above, if it is seriously intended to inculcate the doctrine that the end justifies the means; I can then be at no loss to comprehend why the Spaniards are so often called "proud and noble and high-minded." But until rapaciousness is proved to be virtue, idleness and filth to be a noble disdain of imitating the progressive improvements of other nations; until all that and much more is distinctly proved, I shall keep my present opinion that the Mexicans are to be *pitied*, the Spaniards to be *despised*.

From all I have seen of the state of the country and of the people, during excursions in Mexico of considerably above two thousand miles; from all the inquiries I have made, and books I have consulted; I cannot perceive one single benefit the Spaniards have conferred on their American provinces, in addition to the introduction of horses, cattle, wheat, and a few other articles, except doing away with human sacrifices: and let me add, that atrocious rite was abolished by destroying with fire and sword, many Indian nations and many millions of human beings.

In short, I am not at all surprised that Spain, instead of gaining strength by her vast possessions, or being enriched by the large sums of money she certainly drew from them; has been doomed to

see her population allured to a foreign clime in the hope of gaining rapid wealth, and her lands remain barren for want of hands and inclination to work them.

If I was superstitious, I should say that the late attempt of the Constitutional party to limit the tyrannical power of their king, in which all honest men wished them success, was very possibly allowed to be unsuccessful, because they haughtily rejected the claim of the Mexicans to enjoy the *same* rights and immunities, as they were themselves so eagerly contending for.

CHAP. XVII.

MINING SPECULATIONS.

I HAD intended to have devoted some twenty or thirty pages to the illustration of this chapter; but there really exists so much misconception, so much feverish irritation in the public mind relative to the subject, that I have been persuaded to suspend the publication of my manuscript, even after it had been in the printer's hands: and I shall content myself therefore with now stating, that there positively are many silver mines in the Republic of Mexico, out of which very large sums of money have formerly been extracted, and which still contain much wealth, to reward the labours of the persevering and of the economical.

The above figure was designed to explain one of the processes of the amalgamation; and being engraved, I have inserted it as a proof of the ingenuity of untutored Indians in modelling figures of the silver amalgam.

CHAP. XVIII.

FOREIGNERS IN MEXICO.

As must always be the case in a country newly thrown open to commercial enterprise, and where time has not been allowed for the government to become firmly established, or sincerely desirous of founding a national reputation for integrity and justice, the foreign individuals who flocked to Mexico on its declaration of independence, were not generally of a rank in society to shame the new republicans out of their self-conceit, or to set them an example of good conduct.

I do not mean to assert, that there were not a proportion whose education and manners proved them to have moved among the gentlemen of their own countries; and to save critics unnecessary trouble, I will frankly avow that I place myself among the number of those favoured few; but many were clerks from European or North American counting-houses, suddenly raised by the partiality of their employers into the situation of junior resident partners of the firm at Mexico; others, some one thing, some another; all very good sort of people in their way, but pushing their preten-

sions and their ideas of importance much farther than what can be easily imagined. Whatever disadvantages those gentlemen may have laboured under in the society of their own native towns, were most amply compensated to them in their new residence; for their clothes were so much better made, their linen and faces so much cleaner, their manners and conversation so far superior, to those of the Mexican republicans, that they were gladly received into many of the houses of the richest and the noblest.

European servants were sometimes treated as equals in the capital, and almost always in the smaller towns and villages, by people whose employment in the state and situation in life ought to have taught them the impropriety of so doing. Several Europeans were invited to a sort of public breakfast, at which all the clerical, judicial, and military authorities were present; and in the midst of the feast, an English stable-boy, well dressed, but in the service of a native of title, entered the apartment; he was received with shouts of joy by his Mexican acquaintances, and the judge joined with the commandant in pressing him to take a seat and eat with the rest.

I will not deny but some of that pride began to creep over me, which is so heartily abused as aristocratical and unchristian, and I looked with undisguised astonishment at the servant and the party; the boy, who possessed infinitely more good breed-

ing than the Mexican gentlemen, made many excuses, but at last the affair was compromised by his sitting down near the lower end of the table.

The conduct of this stable-boy impressed me favourably at the time; but when I afterwards heard and witnessed the almost daily scenes of impudence, drunkenness, and disregard to the interests of their employers and their own characters, which were taking place among the European workmen and others throughout the Mexican Republic; I looked upon William's mode of acting as one of the most creditable specimens of English propriety I had met with in Mexico.

It will be quite amusing for those who have the opportunity, to observe how very many of the Europeans who have resided in Mexico, will conduct themselves when they return to their native countries; I strongly suspect, from the unmeasured abuse with which I have heard them descant on the pride, ceremony, haughty politeness, and "all that sort of thing," of the higher orders in Europe; that they will find themselves vastly uncomfortable when again among those who have known them from childhood, and bitterly repent they ever ventured to quit the El Dorado of the New World.

Few things could be more truly absurd, than to listen to the vituperations of those well-meaning individuals against all distinctions conferred by birth, rank, and official situations; while in the same breath they unanimously declared, that *wealth*

and commercial enterprise alone ought to be loaded with honours, station, importance, and respectful deference, by the rest of mankind.

A never-failing subject of conversation and animadversion, was the difficulty experienced by clerks and other confidential agents of money-making men, in procuring a passage from Jamaica to Vera Cruz; for at that period the letters were forwarded in a British vessel of war.

What right had the naval officers to object to resigning their cabins and beds to mercantile men? Were not the cruisers merely stationed to protect commerce? Who paid both officers and seamen except the merchants? Whenever I attempted not only to justify, but to approve of such unprecedented malignity on the part of the officers, I was told it was all "esprit de corps;" and that I no doubt should commit the same outrageous violence against the convenience of others, if I had it in my power.

I confessed the fact; that if I had been provided with a barrack room six feet by two and a half wide in any part of his majesty's dominions, and some worthy stranger, whom I neither had heard of or cared a straw about, had opened my door to solicit I would resign my domicile to him, *because* there was no other to be procured; I should not only have told my visitor to go to the devil, but if I found on inspection that he was not much stronger

than myself, have shown him down stairs without ceremony.

Is it to be tolerated, that after an individual has been received on board a vessel of war notwithstanding the most serious privations to gentlemen of the profession, who get some sixty or ninety pounds a year as a remuneration for all their dangers and services to their country; the same guest makes a point of objecting to all the regulations of the ship as frivolous, to its discipline as tyrannical?

When soldiers or sailors are sentenced to be flogged by a court martial, the members of which are likely more particularly to hate that species of punishment because they are generally obliged to see it inflicted; let persons inquire into the nature of the offence, and then reflect how the mild *civil laws* of Britain would probably treat a similar crime, before they indulge in unqualified accusations of cruelty and oppression. In order to assist their memory, I will openly assert, that in nine cases out of ten, the culprit would be kept several months in jail till the Assizes took place; and being by that time in good condition for the gallows, he would be transported for life or perhaps hanged.

I do not intend to enter into an edifying detail of the quarrels and slanders, and abuse of character, both verbal and published, which took place repeatedly amongst the foreigners residing in the

Federal capital; but shall content myself with stating, that it was a great source of delight to the Mexicans; more particularly because the British heretics figured very conspicuously in the gratifying amusement.

Among many other creditable occurrences, was that of one individual volunteering to make oath that his rival had not got certain documents which he asserted were in his possession, although there could not be any more possibility of the former being acquainted with the fact, than the king of the Ashantees. And as perhaps no circumstance could have more completely displayed the genuine patriotism of some of the worthy Mexican citizens who were in power, I will relate the anecdote.

A gentleman arrived from Europe, with powers of attorney to contract a loan with the Republican government, at a low per centage for premium. But this would not at all suit the cupidity of some three or four influential men; so they agreed to make the required loan with another foreign house at a much higher premium, provided they themselves were allowed to pocket half the profits. Two members of the Congress objected to such a barefaced attack on the public purse; but were silenced by assurances that the whole report relative to the proffered favourable loan was false. Secure in the integrity of his proceedings, and confident in the possession of his credentials, the agent of the less mercenary contractor was determined

not to be easily put down; and being possessed of considerable talent, he managed matters so well that the affair was ordered to be investigated.

When before the authorities, the European agent, who was himself far too honourable to wish that a countryman should take a false oath, even by mistake, strongly urged the other to pause before he proceeded further in the business; but his opponent, looking only to the prospect of pecuniary gain, and being made even more certain by these expostulations that the documents could not be produced, swore positively they did not exist. While the words of the oath were yet tingling in the ears of the assembly, the papers were placed on the table! Yet the volunteer oath-taker earned his reward; for the Mexican ministers, if report says true, most creditably stuck to their bargain, and the nation had to pay the higher premium.

I am not quite sure whether this is one of the loans on which the dividends have not been paid; but I am quite certain that the above anecdote was related to me publicly by an eye-witness, a man of unimpeached honour, and one who must have known the truth; and I am apt to believe, therefore, it was never intended from the commencement, that more of the dividends should be paid than might prove most perfectly convenient and necessary, in order to procure further loans.

The next best thing to understanding a subject, is frankly to acknowledge ignorance, and demand

information; and it is this feeling alone which induces me to insert the following observations.

According to diplomatic etiquette, it appears proper and requisite to remove an Envoy from his situation, precisely at the moment he has by experience and diligence rendered himself master of all the political intrigues, of all the wheels within wheels, which move the machinery of the government he has been deputed to watch; and he is then succeeded by another gentleman equally conspicuous for talent and honour and application, who in like manner is probably called away at the very time he is most capable of being useful. By this constant changing about from country to country, kingdom to kingdom, diplomatists have no doubt excellent opportunities of learning different languages, and of getting a superficial insight into the policy of many courts; but are consequently less likely to become well versed in the ways of any one.

I am aware that such considerations are totally beneath the notice of those who have places to give away; but to the merchants, and to all those whose property or personal security may depend on the local knowledge and proved energy of their king's representative, this system of diplomatic relief assumes quite a different complexion. It is worse than mortifying, when at an immense distance from their native country, amidst people without other rule of conduct than self-interest and fear, to

see the power and the will of their own nation to protect them, rendered quite unavailing by a species of official etiquette.

The contrarieties observable among the foreigners in Mexico were vastly amusing, and not a little instructive. The polite suavity of manners displayed by those who held high official situations could never give complete satisfaction to some of the underlings among mercantile houses. They used to complain of having met such an ambassador or such a diplomatic character in the Alameda, when they were only recognized by a bow or friendly inquiry after health, but received no hearty shake of the hand, no pressing invitation to dinner; and yet, continued the meek grumblers, our horses and trappings were as gay, our clothes and decorations at least as expensive, and being 7000 miles from Europe, we might be treated on the most perfect equality.

On the other hand, an underling in office quarrelled with every naval officer, every merchant, miner, or clerk, who had any unfortunate necessity of applying to him; by the most egregious airs of self-conceit, the most punctilious insisting on removing of hats, and giving of honorary titles. He said he did not understand being addressed only as Mr. ——; it was something new to him to have any title at all, except perhaps Jack, and he thought Mr. was quite unworthy of his situation; he must desire that those who had intercourse with him, would be pleased to remember his station

I had the pleasure of casually introducing a German clerk to a Consul, and shall never forget the astonishment displayed by my companion when we continued our walk: "What! is that very gentlemanly-looking man with whom we have been conversing, really the Consul? Why he was positively as polite and free from pride as if I had known him all my life; whereas his deputy on the coast always treats me as one utterly unworthy even of a reply; and sometimes I have had to wait on him ten times before I could get my employer's business attended to."

Mercantile men who go into so very unsettled a country as Mexico, where the expenses of living and the risk of losses are far greater than in Europe, have certainly a very fair claim to demand greater remuneration and higher charges than in most other places; but I think they pushed their expectations in the new Transatlantic Republic to the very verge of equitable adjustment.

I complained once that the per centage demanded on money transactions, when no risk was incurred, was exorbitant; and the gentleman to whom I spoke, met my remarks in the following open, manly manner: "The charge is high, I admit; but you cannot expect that I should needlessly do business for less than my neighbours. If you can find one respectable house which is willing to charge less, that instant will I lower my rate of interest." I did find one firm willing; and

the above merchant reduced his per centage immediately. This was, indeed, only the first of many proofs I afterwards had of the straightforward, honourable man I had to deal with.

In regard to my own money, however, I was always unfortunate. If I wanted to pay cash at Vera Cruz and receive a bill on any firm at Mexico, I was told there was really so much specie on the coast, that the thing was impossible, unless I paid a heavy per centage; and if I presented letters of credit and begged for cash, it always happened at a moment when just the reverse of the above was the difficulty under which commercial men were labouring.

In the city of Mexico itself, I was still worse off; for if I presented a draft, it could only be paid me in hard dollars; if I begged for a bill on Vera Cruz, I was assured that it would be necessary to send the specie down to that port before the order could be met; and of course I must be charged the freight; and when I begged to receive my own money in gold, I was supplied as a matter of great favour, on the payment of three and a half per cent. discount. Indeed I happen to know, that no less than three and a half per cent. *per month* was required for money lent. These and very many other things I have witnessed on both sides the Atlantic since I quitted the sword and commenced speculator in the "noble art" of gaining pounds, shillings, and pence, have convinced me that the dra-

matist was not too severe in his criticism on trade, when he puts into a merchant's mouth, as wholesome advice for his child, "Make money; honestly if you can; but make money!" And I consider myself perfectly justified in stating, at the commencement of this publication, that the military life is the most honourable and most satisfactory mode of attaining advancement. It is true Dr. Johnson designates a soldier as "a man who hires himself to be shot at for sixpence a day;" but still he therein is somewhat complimented by the "learned leviathan," not only as being merely accused of folly, but as one having at least secured sixpence a day; whereas it seems generally to be unknown, that the best behaved private in his majesty's service does not receive more than *twopence* a day from his loving country, after the deductions for mess, washing, pipeclay, brushes, shoes, and various etceteras have been made.

At an early hour one morning, a party of three made an excursion from the city of Puebla to the pyramids of Cholula; and on our route, we were remarking with great pleasure the effects of the sun on the snow which covered the sides of the mountain Popocatepetl. As the thaw increased, small misty vapours were seen to roll up the steep acclivities until they reached the highest peak of the cone; where they hung for a few moments in a towering column, as if unwilling to quit the last resting-place, and sail forwards through

the ether; but being once passed, nothing but the dark blue sky and the clear outline of the crater was visible. Other veils of fleecy evaporations succeeded; and the whole scene was so beautiful and so deceptive to a casual observer, that we all exclaimed at once, "if the worthy man who wrote his very amusing book on Mexico a few years back was here, he would stoutly declare the volcano was in activity."

At night when we returned to Puebla, the first person we met was the worthy author in question, who immediately exclaimed, "Well, gentlemen, I have seen this day what I never hoped to live to see, the great Popocatepetl vomiting forth smoke; no doubt its flames will speedily illumine the heavens, its ashes carry alarm and destruction to the miserable people." I laughed outright, and so did my companions; but we pointed at an object across the street, as if that had moved our risible propensities.

The gentleman I allude to, became afterwards furiously hostile to the Mexicans; and openly threatened to publish another edition of his work to contradict all the good he had formerly written. I sincerely hope he may, as it will more completely open the eyes of my countrymen than any attempt of mine can do; but at the same time I must declare my belief, that if the first edition had not been sent forth to the public in a spirit of candour and sincerity, the author would never have visited

México a second time with the intention of residing in it. I put in my protest, however, against all accounts of the mighty Popocatepetl vomiting forth flames, cinders, or even smoke.

Will my readers forgive me, if I say one good-natured thing, repeat one creditable fact, at the end of my Mexican Illustrations? It is not, I will premise, in favour of any neighbour or of even a countryman, but of foreigners. At the anniversary dinner given on the 4th of July, 1825, by the American ambassador in Mexico; and at which all classes of citizens from the United States were present, so that the feeling displayed cannot be *solely* attributed to their polite and gentlemanly entertainer; an Englishman who was of the party declared, that not a toast, not an opinion, was given by the company, which could have excited the displeasure of any British subject.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS,

MADE AT

TLALPUJAHUA* IN MEXICO,

WITH

TWO OF FAHRENHEIT'S THERMOMETERS, DURING PART OF THE YEAR 1825.

Date.	Time.	Ther. 1.	Ther. 2	State of the Weather.
July 31	Noon	62½°	...	Cloudy, but rain not commenced.
Aug. 1	6 A.M.	61½	...	Fine sunshiny morning.
...	1 P.M.	62½	...	Rain, in heavy showers.
...	7 P.M.	62½	...	Rain, and much colder to the feelings.
2	7 A.M.	61	...	Beautiful morning, Ther. 98° when placed in the sun.
3	8 A.M.	60½	...	A cold wind.
...	1 P.M.	63	...	Showers and cloudy.
5	8 A.M.	60	...	Cloudy, and colder to the feelings.
...	1 P.M.	60	...	Rain, and like an English November day.
7	8 A.M.	60	...	Fine morning.
8	11 P.M.	58	...	This was a rainy November day.
13	Midnt.	57	...	In my bed-room at 11 P.M. it stood at 61½.
15	9 A.M.	61		
...	1 P.M.	62½		
...	10 P.M.	57	62	After rain.
16	10 P.M.	56	61	
17	9 P.M.	56	60½	After a rainy day.
19	Midnt.	55	62	
20	9 A.M.	63	61	
...	8 P.M.	56	62	Much rain.
31	6 P.M.	59	61½	Rain.
Sept. 1	8 P.M.	60	62	Rain.
2	8 P.M.	55	61½	Rain.
3	Midnt.	55½	...	Fine night, after much rain.
4	10 P.M.	56	62	Fine.
5	7 A.M.	58	60	Fine morning.
...	9 P.M.	59½	62	Fine.
6	6 A.M.	57	61	Fine.

* Tlalpujahua is at an elevation of 8530 feet above the sea. Ther. 1 was suspended in an open balcony facing the ESE, but in a spot always shaded. Ther. 2 was placed in my bed-room, same aspect, with window open during the day only. When the direction of the wind is not specifically stated it was not observed. The same may be said of blanks, sometimes found among the Observations.

Date.	Time.	Ther. 1.	Ther. 2.	State of the Weather.
Sept. 6	10 P.M.	59½	62½	Cloudy and very dark.
7	1 P.M.	61	63	Cloudy.
...	2 P.M.	68	62½	Fine.
...	7 P.M.	61	63	Wind and rain.
...	11 P.M.	57½	63	Heavy rain and wind.
8	8 A.M.	58	61	Cloudy and chilly.
...	2 P.M.	65½	62½	Fine, but cloudy and wind.
...	10 P.M.	58½	62½	Rain and very cold.
9	10 A.M.	64½	61½	Fine.
...	11 P.M.	56½	62½	Fine night.
10	8 A.M.	62	61	Fine.
...	10 P.M.	57	62½	Cloudy.
11	11 A.M.	65	63	Fine, but rather cloudy.
...	1 P.M.	60	63	Rain and thunder.
...	10 P.M.	56½	63	Cloudy and showers.
12	2 P.M.	68	62½	Cloudy.
13	Midnt.	55½	62	Cloudy.
14	8 A.M.	61	60½	Fine.
...	7 P.M.	57½	61	Rainy.
...	11 P.M.	59	61½	Rain.
15	1 P.M.	61	61	Rain.
16	9 A.M.	65	61	Fine sunshine.
...	7 P.M.	60½	62	Cloudy night.
...	Midnt.	55	62	Starlight.
17	7 A.M.	63	60½	Fine.
...	3 P.M.	68½	63½	Fine, but cloudy.
...	7 P.M.	63½	62½	Cloudy.
...	11 P.M.	61½	63	Lightning and cloudy.
18	7 A.M.	57	61	Rain.
...	7 P.M.	59	62½	Fine night.
19	8 A.M.	61	61	Fine.
...	11 P.M.	56½	62	Rain.
20	7 A.M.	65	61½	Fine.
...	2 P.M.	62	62½	Rain.
...	7 P.M.	57	61½	Fine.
...	½p11P.M.	56	62½	Fine night with lightning.
21	½ p7A.M.	63	62	Fine morning.
...	½p10P.M.	57	62½	Fine night.
22	8 A.M.	64½	61	Fine.
..	5 P.M.	59	62	Rain.
...	7 P.M.	59½	61½	Rain.
...	½p11P.M.	56½	62½	Fine night.
23	7 A.M.	61½	60½	Beautiful.
...	2 P.M.	65½	62	Heavy showers.
...	7 P.M.	58½	61½	Cloudy and showers.
...	11 P.M.	59	62	Moonlight and fine.
24	7 A.M.	55	60½	Cloudy and cold.
...	9 A.M.	62½	60½	Fine, and 94° in the sunshine, wind SSW.
...	1 P.M.	60	61	Showers.
...	8 P.M.	56	61	Moonlight night.

Date.	Time.	Ther. 1.	Ther. 2.	Wind.	State of the Weather.
Sept.25	7 A.M.	59	58½	...	Beautiful morning, 88° in the sun.
...	2 P.M.	66½	62	...	Fine, but cloudy.
...	½p10P.M.	59	61½	...	Cloudy night.
26	7 A.M.	59½	60	E	Fine, but cloudy.
...	1 P.M.	64¼	61¼	SW	Cloudy.
...	½p8 P.M.	53¼	60¼	...	Cloudy.
...	11 P.M.	54	60½	...	Cloudy.
27	½p5 A.M.	50¼	56	E	Fine, but the sun had not risen.
...	9 A.M.	56	58	...	Fine.
...	½p7 P.M	54	58	...	Fine.
28	½p6 A.M.	50	56	E	Beautiful morning.
...	½p8 A.M.	60	56½	E	Fine.
...	Midday.	65	58	...	Fine.
...	7 P.M.	57½	58½	...	Moonlight.
...	11 P.M.	52	58¼	...	Clear moonlight night.
29	9 A.M.	63	58	...	Fine morning.
...	11 A.M.	65½	58½	NE	Fine.
...	2 P.M.	67½	58½	N	Fine.
...	½p11P.M.	56	59½	...	Cloudy.
30	½p 6 A.M.	56½	59	E	Cloudy.
...	11 A.M.	59½	59½	E	Small rain, or rather mist.
...	2 P.M.	60	59½	E	Showers of small rain.
...	6 P.M.	57½	59½	...	Cloudy.
...	Midnt.	56½	60	...	Cloudy.
Oct. 1	½p 6 A.M.	59	59	E	Fine.
...	9 A.M.	63	60	...	Fine.
...	3 P.M.	65	60¼	...	Fine.
...	½p11P.M.	55	60½	...	Moonlight and fine.
2	6 A.M.	51	59	NE	Fine.
...	Noon.	68½	60¾	N	Fine.
...	7 P.M.	63	61½	...	Starlight night.
...	11 P.M.	56½	60¼	...	Moonlight.—Saw a comet about 45° high, nearly east direction.
3	½p 9 A.M.	64	60	N	Fine.
...	3 P.M.	69	64	N	Fine.
...	Midnt.	60¼	62	...	Fine night, with much lightning.
4	½p 7 A.M.	63	60½	E	Fine.
...	2 P.M.	70¼	62¾	NE	Fine.—A violent thunder-storm this afternoon about five.
...	½p7 P.M.	55½	61¼	...	Cloudy and lightning.
...	½p10P.M.	56½	61¼	...	Starlight and lightning.
5	½p7 A.M.	53	...	S	Fine morning.
...	7 P.M.	62¼	61½	...	Fine, but cloudy.
6	¼p6 A.M.	54½	60½	S	Fine.
...	10 P.M.	58	60½	...	Thunder-storm since 3, with rain.
7	7 A.M.	64½	60½	NE	Fine.
...	9 P.M.	59	60¼	...	Cloudy, with lightning.
8	½p6 A.M.	57½	61	...	Cloudy, but fine.
...	3 P.M.	60	61¾	W	Heavy rain.
...	½p10P.M.	56¼	61	...	Rain.—This was one of the most regular rainy days we have had.

Date.	Time.	Ther. 1.	Ther. 2.	Wind.	State of the Weather.
Oct. 9	8 A.M.	58½	60⅓	S	Cloudy.
...	½p11 P.M.	56½	61	...	Cloudy, after a rainy evening.
10	7 A.M.	63½	60½	...	Fine morning.
...	9 P.M.	56½	60½	...	Heavy rain and thunder.
...	½p11 P.M.	57¼	61¼	...	Heavy rain.
11	7 A.M.	57	60¼	SE	Cloudy, after a most rainy night.
...	10 A.M.	62½	...	...	Fine.
...	3 P.M.	66¼	60¼	E	Fine.
...	¼p11 P.M.	56	60¾	...	Cloudy; some rain with lightning.
12	½p6 A.M.	52	60	SE	Beautiful morning.
...	9 A.M.	62½	60½	NE by E	Fine.
...	11 P.M.	55½	61	...	Fine starlight night. The comet travels rapidly from east to south, and is very distinct.
13	½p6 A.M.	54½	59¾	SE	Fine.
...	3 P.M.	67½	61¼	E	Fine.
...	½p8 P.M.	59	60½	...	Fine night.
...	11 P.M.	56¾	61	...	Fine.
14	9 A.M.	76	61	NE by E	Fine.
...	1 P.M.	71¼	62½	...	Fine.
...	11 P.M.	56½	62	...	Fine night, after a thunder-storm at sun-set. Comet is rapidly travelling S, tail pointing NNE.
Nov. 13	Noon.	70	...	...	Beautiful day.
14	10 A.M.	70½	60½	SE by E	Fine day.
...	Noon.	66	60	...	Cloudy.
15	9 A.M.	58½	60	E	Cloudy.
...	2½ P.M.	57½	60	...	Cloudy and cold wind.
...	8½ P.M.	50	59½	...	Cloudy, cold, and stormy.
16	2 P.M.	67	60	SE	Fine.
17	6½ A.M.	55	59¾	NE	Fine.
...	10 P.M.	50¼	60	...	Cloudy and much wind.
18	9½ A.M.	54	58½	E	Cloudy and cold.
...	8½ P.M.	50½	59½	...	Fine night.
...	Midnt.	46½	59¼	...	Fine starlight night.
19	9 A.M.	75½	59½	E	Beautiful morning.
...	2 P.M.	68¾	60	...	Fine.
...	Midnt.	50½	60	...	Fine night, no wind.
20	11 A.M.	71½	60	NE	Fine.
...	6¼ P.M.	59	59	E	Fine.
...	10 P.M.	53	59	...	Fine.
21	Noon.	70	60	ENE	Fine, but cloudy.
...	6 P.M.	58	59½	...	Cloudy and showers.
22	8½ A.M.	71	60¼	...	Beautiful.
...	3 P.M.	70	60¾	E	Cloudy.
23	Noon.	72	61	ENE	Fine.
...	6 P.M.	60¼	60½	...	Fine night.
...	10½ P.M.	59½	60½	...	Fine clear night.
24	8½ A.M.	75	61	...	Fine morning.
25	Noon.	69	61	ENE	Fine.

Date.	Time.	Ther. 1.	Ther. 2.	Wind.	State of the Weather.
Nov.25	5½ P.M.	63	60½	...	Fine.
27	11¼ A.M.	67	60¼	...	Beautiful day.
...	2¾ P.M.	68	60¼	...	Beautiful.
29	10½ A.M.	72	59	...	Beautiful.
30	11 A.M.	70	59½	...	Beautiful.
Dec. 1	9 A.M.	63	58¾	SSW	Fine, with some clouds, and cold.
...	1 P.M.	65	59	...	Beautiful.
...	5½ P.M.	55	58½	...	Beautiful evening.
...	9 P.M.	47	58	...	Clear starlight night, frosty.
2	8¼ A.M.	67	59	SSW	Beautiful morning.
..	Noon.	64	58½	...	Fine, but much wind; some clouds.
...	7 P.M.	52	57½	...	Starlight, but very cold.
3	7½ A.M.	69	58½	SSW	Beautiful.
...	2 P.M.	60½	58	...	Fine, but cold wind.
...	9 P.M.	55	57½	...	Dark and cloudy.
4	10 A.M.	56	58	SW	Quite cloudy and rain.
...	2 P.M.	55	57½	...	Mist, rain, English November day.
...	11 P.M.	50	57	...	Constant rain.
5	9 A.M.	47	55½	NNW	Thick mist.
...	3 P.M.	56	56½	...	Cloudy, but fine.
...	10½ P.M.	46	56¼	...	Starlight night and cold.
6	6½ A.M.	50½	56	N W	Beautiful.
...	9 A.M.	56	56	...	Cloudy, but fine.
...	8 P.M.	52	56½	...	Cloudy and dark.
7	10 A.M.	57	56	SW	Fine, but cloudy.
...	Noon.	59¾	56½	...	Cloudy.
...	1 P.M.	47	56	...	Starlight.
8	7 A.M.	47	56	W	Cloudy and mists.
...	Noon.	56	55½	...	Cloudy, but fine.
...	2 P.M.	59	55½	NW	Fine.
...	9 P.M.	48	55¾	...	Starlight night.
*9	6½ A.M.	50	55½	...	Beautiful sun-rise.
...	9 A.M.	66	56½	SW	Beautiful.
...	Noon.	65	56½	...	Beautiful.
...	6 P.M.	50¼	55½	...	Starlight night.
...	11 P.M.	46	55½	...	Fine starlight night. The comet has disappeared in the south; at least I can't see it.
10	8½ A.M.	66	56½	W	Beautiful.
...	1 P.M.	65½	55½	...	Beautiful.
...	6½ P.M.	49	55½	...	Starlight and clear.
...	Midnt.	45	55	...	Clear starlight.
11	7 A.M.	49	55½	NE by E	Fine morning.
...	2½ P.M.	61	55½	...	Fine.

* This day the sun was almost totally eclipsed; and I regretted much that I had no good watch or chronometer to make accurate observations. However, it commenced about 2 P.M. with the sky perfectly clear; at about 2 h. 3 P.M. the disk of the sun was so nearly covered, that merely its western limb, like a new moon, could be seen. The gloom spread over all nature was excessive, notwithstanding that the sky was without a speck. It ended about 4 P.M.

Date.	Time.	Ther. 1.	Ther. 2.	Wind.	State of the Weather.
Dec. 11	11 P.M.	42	55	...	Clear starlight night.
12	8 A.M.	60	55½	NE	Beautiful.
...	1 P.M.	62	56	...	Beautiful.
...	6 P.M.	53	54¾	...	Fine clear night.
...	11 P.M.	39	54½	...	Clear starlight night.
13	6½ A.M.	32	53	...	Fine morning. There was ice in the different tubs out of doors ¼ inch thick, and large icicles.
...	10 A.M.	61	54½	NE	Fine sunshine.
...	Noon.	60	53½	...	Beautiful, but cold wind.
...	10½ P.M.	39	53½	...	Starlight and very cold.
14	6¼ A.M.	32	52½	NE	Fine, but very cold.
...	7½ A.M.	51	53½	...	Beautiful.
...	½p noon.	62	53½	...	Beautiful.
...	9½ P.M.	40	53½	...	Fine night.
...	11½ P.M.	35	53	...	Starlight night.
15	7 A.M.	39	52½	NNE	Beautiful morning.
...	Noon.	64¼	54	...	Beautiful.
...	5½ P.M.	54	53¾	...	Fine evening.
...	11 P.M.	40	53¼	...	Starlight.
16	7½ A.M.	52	53½	...	Beautiful. The hoar-frosts in the morning are as strong as in England, with much ice.
...	Noon.	62	53¼	NNE	Beautiful.
...	7 P.M.	51	53	...	Starlight.
...	11 P.M.	41	53	...	Starlight.
17	3½ A.M.	32	52½	...	Starlight.
...	6½ A.M.	32	51¼	...	Fine morning.
...	1 P.M.	62	52¾	N	Beautifully clear.
...	8 P.M.	46	52¾	...	Starlight.
...	Midnt.	40	52¼	...	Beautiful night, but very cold.
18	7 A.M.	53	52¾	...	Beautiful and clear.
...	2½ P.M.	63	54	NE	Beautiful.
...	Midnt.	37	52¾	...	Starlight, very cold.
19	7 A.M.	43	52¼	...	Beautiful.
...	1 P.M.	64	53¾	N	Beautiful.
20	7 A.M.	50	53½	...	Beautiful.
...	10½ A.M.	62	53½	E	Beautiful.
...	Noon.	62	53½	...	Beautiful.
...	5¾ P.M.	57	53½	...	Fine.
...	Midnt.	39	53	...	Starlight and cold.
22	7¼ A.M.	42	52	N	Beautiful.
...	Noon.	64	53½	...	Beautiful.
...	3 P.M.	60	53½	NNW	Cloudy.
...	7 P.M.	50	53½	...	Cloudy, but moonlight.
...	10¼ P.M.	46	53	...	Cloudy, but moonlight.
23	7¼ A.M.	40	52½	W	Cloudy.
...	11 P.M.	45	53¾	...	Starlight.
24	8½ A.M.	62	55	...	Beautiful.
...	Noon.	63	55	W	Beautiful.

Date.	Time.	Ther. 1.	Ther. 2.	Wind.	State of the Weather.
Dec. 24	11½ P.M.	43	54½	...	Moonlight and clear.
25	Midnt.	48	55	...	Fine starlight, but violent wind occasionally.
26	7½ A.M.	57	55½	...	Beautiful.
...	11¼ A.M.	64	56	NE	Fine, with some clouds.
...	4¼ P.M.	58	55¾	...	Heavy clouds, and a little rain.
...	11½ P.M.	42	55¼	...	Clear starlight.
27	7¾ A.M.	56	55¾	...	Beautiful.
...	2¼ P.M.	62	56	NE	Fine, but heavy clouds.

BAROMETRICAL OBSERVATIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MEXICO.

The Centigrade Thermometer is reduced to the Scale of Fahrenheit.

Date.	Hour.	Ther.	Bar.	Feet.	Place of Observation, and Remarks.
1825.					
Oct. 16	9 A.M.	66°	23·673	6997	Hacienda of Patteo, in the plain northward of Tlalpuxahua. Fine weather.
...	3 P.M.	71½	23·731	6928	Town of Maravatio. Fine weather, but very hot to the feelings.
17	9½ A.M.	57½	21·953	9031	Mountain of San Andreis, at the foot of the Peak. Mean of two observations.
...	2 P.M.	62	21·563	9590	Sulphur Lake on the Mountain San Andreis. Fine weather.
...	...	62½	23·485	7207	Village of San Matias. The mean of two observations.
18	10¼ A.M.	64	23·115	7650	Hamlet of San Andreis. The Thermometer, when exposed to the sun, showed 95°.
...	1½ P.M.	65	23·049	7568	In a ravine on the side of the mountain.
19	...	60	23·103	7635	Real of Ozumatlan. Mean of two observations. Mines are not reputed rich, but abundant.
...	...	65	24·043	6539	Village of Indaparapeo. Mean of two observations.
20	9½ A.M.	62	24·170	6298	Village of Charo. Orange trees flourish here.
24	...	66½	24·011	6484	City of Valladolid. Fine weather. Mean of thirteen observations.
...	3 P.M.	67½	23·010	7746	Hamlet of Guiracha.
26	...	62¾	23·382	7251	Town of Patzquaro; about 200 feet higher than the Lake. Mean of four observations.
...	Noon.	69	22·891	7597	Hamlet of Janiqueo. Hoar-frost still on the ground in some shady spots.
27	...	66¼	23·960	6298	Town of Ario. Very chilly wind. The mean of two observations.
...	10¼ A.M.	79½	26·115	3860	Last pine tree, and growing among oaks and fan palms. Fine weather.
28	7½ A.M.	70	26·957	2890	Base of the Cone of Jorullo. Fine weather.
...	8½ A.M.	74½	25·827	4114	SW peak of the Cone of Jorullo: in some cracks the vapour burnt my hand.

Date.	Hour.	Ther.	Bar.	Feet.	Place of Observation, and Remarks.
1825.					
Oct.28	9¼ A.M.	75	25·830	4088	NE peak. Crater does not emit smoke; is 600 or 700 feet deep; nearly half a mile across.
...	10¾ A.M.	81	26·689	3115	Spot where we dismounted. Fine, with a chilly wind.
...	...	79½	26·878	2985	Hacienda of Tacamanil. Mean of three observations. Thermometer 82° in the shade.
29	1 P.M.	90½	28·323	1523	Banks of a torrent. Mean of two observations.
...	10 P.M.	85	28·800	1023	Hamlet of Crucitas. The Thermometer did not sink below 80° during the night.
30	...	86	29·085	737	Cattle Hacienda of Cutio, on the banks of the river Bolsas. Mean of two observations.
31	9¼ A.M.	88	29·073	865	Village of Churumuto.
Nov. 1	2¾ P.M.	94	28·250	1521	Hut of San Antonio. Rainy weather.
...	5½ P.M.	86½	27·243	2594	Top of a steep ridge. Fine weather.
2	5 A.M.	75	27·520	2264	Hamlet of Plantala.
...	11 A.M.	88	28·510	1275	Hut of Buena Vista, in a ravine.
3	5¾ A.M.	73	28·748	987	Hut of Gairandero.
...	Noon.	82	26·211	3682	Summit of the Pass. Magnificent views southward of the Sierra Madre.
4	6¼ A.M.	65	27·323	2437	Hamlet of Huacuro, or Santa Cruz. Fine weather.
...	3 P.M.	88½	27·185	2657	Hamlet of El Sapote.
5	6 A.M.	65	27·649	2098	Hamlet of Huapaquaro.
...	10¼ A.M.	86	27·448	2372	Village of Turicato; made pleasing by trees, and two streams of water.
...	...	69½	26·114	3704	Hamlet of Chupio. Large plantations of sugar canes. Mean of two observations.
6	7½ A.M.	70	25·460	4466	First pine tree on this route.
...	Noon.	68½	23·491	6742	Hamlet of Piedra de Molinos; among the pine ridges.
...	3¾ P.M.	62	22·751	7621	Hamlet of San Andreis.
7	6½ A.M.	44	22·685	7657	Hamlet of La Guada. Extremely chilly to the feelings.
...	11¼ A.M.	78	24·943	5118	Village of Etuquaro: a hot and a cold spring burst out of the same lime rock at this place, within a few inches of each other.

Date.	Hour.	Ther.	Bar.	Feet.	Place of Observation, and Remarks.
1825.					
Nov. 7	...	56	23·076	7245	Hamlet of Pitaya. Mean of two observations.
8	1 P.M.	67½	23·363	6924	Village of Jesus del Monte; a few miles east of Valladolid.
...	7 P.M.	65	23·874	6306	Manor-house, or Hacienda of Erapeo. Thermometer, during the night, fell to 50°.
9	2½ P.M.	76	24·989	5041	Village of Tzizio, situated in a hollow.
...	4½ P.M.	72	25·951	3949	Valley of Arroyo del Agüa caliente; a deep and narrow dell.
10	6½ A.M.	59½	25·030	4927	Hamlet of Sienega. Much wind and rain during the night; but Ther. never below temperate.
...	7¾ A.M.	66	24·550	5488	Top of the ridge.
...	10¾ A.M.	81	26·395	3451	Village of Chapatuato. Sugar canes cultivated here.
...	3 P.M.	69½	23·400	6872	Top of the ridge covered with pine trees. Much thunder.
11	...	55½	22·895	7440	Bivouac, on a pine mountain. Rainy and chilly. Mean of two observations.
..	7¾ A.M.	49½	22·041	8464	Highest point of our path.
...	2¼ P.M.	68½	23·456	7034	Village of San Jeronimo. Much rain.
12	6¾ A.M.	62	23·770	6782	Village of Tajimaroa. Fine.
..	2½ P.M.	67½	22·600	8218	Hacienda de Beneficio, called Los Reyes.
1826					
Nov. 7	...	77	30·187	...	Vera Cruz; being the mean of four observations.
8	10 A.M.	77	30·160	32½	Hamlet of Santa Fé.
.	2 P.M.	84	30·150	78	Hamlet of Manantceal.
..	9 P.M.	75	29·960	224	Village of Puente del Rey; half-way to Xalapa from Vera Cruz.
9	½ A.M.	67	29·306	828	Village of Plan del Rio.
..	Noon.	79	27·252	2942	Hamlet of Encero; immediately at the foot of the Orizaba range of mountains.
10	11 A.M.	66	25·851	4381	Town of Xalapa, or Jalapa, from which jalap takes its name.
11	1 P.M.	53½	22·913	7721	Village of Las Vigas; among the pine ridges. Rainy weather.
.....	11 P.M.	54	22·940	7692	Hacienda of Guatepec, near Perote. Rainy and very cold to the feelings.

Date.	Hour.	Ther.	Bar...	Feet.	Place of Observation, and Remarks.
1826.					
Nov.12	1 P.M.	63½	23·153	7464	Village of Tepajualco.
...	10 P.M.	60	23·117	7434	Inn of El Ojo del Agüa.
13	1 P.M.	68	22·814	7828	Village of Cajete; at the foot of some pine hills.
14	8 A.M.	60½	23·680	6786	City of Puebla; of 70,000 inhabitants. Mean of three observations.
...	8 P.M.	61½	23·306	6806	Town of San Martin, at the base of the second range of Cordilleras.
15	Noon.	60½	21·448	9118	Hamlet of Los Frios: among the summits of the pine ridges.
19	..	60	23·469	7077	City of Mexico.* The mean of five observations; but 300 feet lower than other individuals have made it. Fine weather.
...	1 P.M.	49	21·010	10082	Summit of Las Crucis ridge, west side of the Valley of Mexico. Fine weather.
...	6 P.M.	55¼	22·481	8253	Town of Lerma. Here rises the river which flows into the Pacific at San Blas.
20	10 A.M.	56½	22·557	8156	Hut above a bridge in the Vale of Toluca.
...	7 P.M.	57½	22·544	8176	Hacienda of Tepetitclan.
21	10 A.M.	58½	22·597	8113	Rivulet among the pine ridges.
27	...	56	22·401	8411	Bed-room at Tlalpuxahua. Mean of twelve observations at different dates.

* It will be observed, that the Barometer I used generally made the elevations two or three hundred feet lower than what is considered the true heights.

MEAN OF A SERIES OF DAILY OBSERVATIONS ON THE HEIGHT OF MERCURY,

MADE AT TLALPUXAHUA, IN MEXICO,

With one of Cary's Barometers, and given to me by Mr. BURKART, *a scientific German Gentleman, employed as Chief Miner by the Company.*

MORNING.				NOON.			EVENING.		
Date.	Time.	Fahr. Ther.	Barometer.	Time.	Fahr. Ther.	Barometer.	Time.	Fahr. Ther.	Barometer.
Nov. 1825	5 A. M.	57½°	22·876	1 P. M.	58⅓°	22·315	6 P. M.	58°	22·320
Dec. ..	....	53	22·350	....	53	22·293	....	53	22·296
Jan. 1826	....	53	22·292	....	53⅓	22·207	....	53¼	22·234
Feb. ..	....	55½	22·324	2 P. M.	57	22·242	....	56½	22·270
March ..	....	59	22·337	....	59⅓	22·243	....	59⅕	22·274
April ..	....	61	22·343	....	62½	22·278	....	62	22·286
May ..	....	64½	22·332	....	66	22·274	7 P. M.	65½	22·272
June ..	....	64	22·308	....	65	22·269	....	64½	22·273
July ..	....	62	22·374	....	62½	22·319	....	62⅓	22·362
Aug. ..	....	61⅓	22·340	....	62	22·292	....	62	22·304

THE END.

JAMES WHITE, PRINTER, BEDFORD STREET, STRAND

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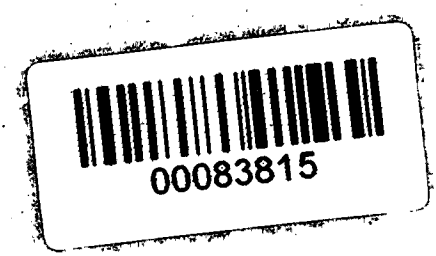

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